DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 202 125 EA 013 575

AUTHOR Abramowitz, Susan; Stackhouse, E. Ann
TITLE The Private High School Today.
INSTITUTION National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Dec 80
NOTE 167p.; Tables and figures may reproduce poorly due to colored inks used in original document.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrative Organization; Administrator Attitudes; Catholic Schools; Comparative Analysis; Economics; *Educational Administration; Educational Research; Federal Programs; Principals; *Private Schools; *Program Development; Public Policy; *Public Schools; Secondary Education; State Programs; Surveys

ABSTRACT

Comparison of data from a survey of private high schools sponsored by the National Institute of Education (NIE) and the Council for American Private Education with data from a companion survey of public high schools conducted by NIE and the National Association of Secondary School Principals provides the basis for this collection of individually-authored chapters assessing the services and organization of public and private high schools. The first few chapters of the book describe the nature of private secondary schools--their programs, organization, and management--and the sample of private high schools from which the data were drawn. Later chapters explore the attitudes and goals of public and private school principals, the Catholic high school, the external pressures schools face (particularly in federal- and state-funded programs), the effects of competition and choice in the school marketplace, the private school as a subject for educational research, and public policy and private education. The initial survey on private schools offers a broad baseline of information representative of the variety of high schools throughout the country and will be followed by subsequent research. Survey results, the sampling plan, and responses are appended. (Author/WD)

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ED202125

The Private High School Today

Susan Abramowitz
E. Ann Stackhouse

with

Denis P. Doyle
William T. Garner
Jane Hannaway
Robert R. Newton
Arthur G. Powell

U.S. Department of Education

Office of Educational Research and Improvement

National Institute of Education

Washington, D.C. 20208

EA 013 575

Foreword

American educational institutions exist to promote the public welfare and to serve their communities and the Nation by serving students and their families. Some, the public schools, are financed primarily by public monies; some, the private (nonpublic) schools, primarily from private sources. But all are integral parts of an evolving national education establishment that has its origins in earliest colonial times. All have been created by the public, and all depend on the support of the public for their existence. Public or private in name, they are all social agencies: instruments of the people, responsible to the people, proper subjects for public policy consideration.

A wide range of conflicting and interrelated social forces—ideological, economic, and political—have raised serious education-related public policy questions. Recent debate on these issues has intensified the need for sound public policy and a clearer understanding of the character and contributions of both public and private schools and, equally important, of the ways in which they interact. Comparatively speaking, there is considerable information about public schools, very little about private schools, and virtually none about their interrelating social roles. The recent national debate on tuition tax credits has been described, with considerable accuracy, as "a bloody battle of myths on an ill-defined field." The public, and the schools, deserve something better.

Happily, there is increasing recognition of this need. Early, but promising, steps are being taken to meet it. The study reported here is both an evidence of that recognition of need and a step toward fulfilling it. For the first time, two major national education organizations (the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the Council for American Private Education) have collaborated with a major Federal education agency (the National Institute of Education) in a study of public and private schools. This collaboration has been both immediately worthwhile and immensely encouraging for the future success of such efforts.

The findings reported here provide the first national information on parallel investigations of representative samples of American public and private schools, indicating substantial similarities and significant differences, and suggesting possible reasons for both. Having established a data base that is itself valuable, the investigators then turn to a panel of experts for analysis of the implications of the study for public and private school administrators, for continuing research, and for public policy development. This analysis makes clear the strengths and limitations of the present study, the potential significance of the further research it suggests, and the importance of the proposed inquiries to the long-range development of wise public policy. The whole warrants thoughtful consideration.

ROBERT L. LAMBORN
Former Executive Director,
Council for American Private Education

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1. Introduction

The investment in American private education is sizable, yet it is surprising how little is known about it.

Private schools account for nearly 10 percent of the elementary and secondary education sector when measured in three important ways: number of students, number of teachers, and number of dollars spent. This translates into 5 million students, 20,000 schools, and approximately $4 billion.[1] The percentage is small, but the numbers are not.

Two issues have recently brought private education into the public limelight. First, declining enrollments are causing the education sector to contract; and, since there are fewer students to go around, their distribution between the public and private sector is becoming more important. Like public school enrollments, private school enrollments have been declining, due in large part to the decline in Catholic school enrollments, which account for three-fourths of the nonpublic school enrollments. Enrollments in non-Catholic schools, however, are on the upswing (Erickson, 1978).

Second, interest is growing in a program of government support for private education. The 95th Congress seriously considered enacting a tuition tax credit bill, and although it did not pass, the impetus behind that bill remains strong. A tax deduction for private schools has withstood a legal challenge in Minnesota, but a voucher plan that appeared on the ballot in Michigan was defeated. More recently a voucher initiative failed to gain the necessary signatures to reach the California ballot in June 1980.

Motivating this interest in nonpublic education is a series of complex and complicated perceptions about the nature of both public and nonpublic education. Many believe that public education has lost touch with its clients, that educational efficiency and productivity are not what they should be, and that the public system is becoming increasingly bureaucratized (West, 1977). Many of those who can afford it, and some who cannot, find that private schools offer something special. Underlying the argument over a public versus a private education is the issue of parental choice in the education of their children.

Some researchers have found that growth among nonpublic schools is most pronounced where public education is in greatest disfavor, most noticeably in urban areas, the South, and Southwest (Erickson, 1978). The public schools are under attack with the most frequent criticisms arising from concerns about drug

abuse, discipline, sex education, controversial books, and extent of academic rigor. Although racism may have prompted the founding of some private schools, widespread fear and distrust of the public schools and parental desire to establish schools that have a religious foundation or "old fashioned" American values appear to be just as important (Nevin, 1976). Other reasons parents choose to enroll their children in private schools are the unavailability of certain services in the public schools and a preference or need for special teaching methods (Porter and Porter, 1973).

According to research on the most commonly studied types of private schools—independent schools, Church-related schools (Catholic, Lutheran, Jewish, etc.), and alternative schools—these schools have attributes that parents want enough to offset their cost. The independent schools are known for their middle-class, ambitious, and bright students and their emphasis on academic excellence and college preparation (Baird, 1977). Such uniformity of purpose also characterizes parochial schools, whose students are, by and large, better disciplined, more highly motivated toward college and professional occupations, and more representative of higher socioeconomic backgrounds than their public school counterparts. Similarly, Catholic parochial schools concentrate more on basic academic skills, whereas the public schools tend to offer a broader curriculum (Morton et al., 1977). But homogeneity of clientele and goal directedness do not guarantee excellence in education. For example, southern segregation academies, despite student and faculty commitment, tend to have fewer facilities and poorer and more narrow curriculums than the public schools (Nevin, 1976).

Independent and religious schools, however, are usually more structured and focused than alternative schools. Although the survival rate of alternative schools has been low because of organizational and financial problems (Deal, 1975), those that do survive tend to be less bureaucratic than public schools (Duke, 1976). Alternative schools appear to minimize centralization of authority, functional specialization, and standardization of procedures, choosing instead participatory involvement in decisionmaking.

Regardless of whether parental dislike of public education or preference for private education is the motivating factor, a common theme in the current debate about private education is the issue of choice. Many believe that public education is most accurately viewed as a virtual monopoly, affording minimal parental input. In the face of a public bureaucracy, so the argument goes, schools have little interest or reason to be responsive to their clientele and parents feel powerless to affect the education of their children successfully. This has led to an increasing interest in governmental support of parental choice and the recurrent demands for educational vouchers (Coons and Sugarman, 1978; Cohen and Ferrar, 1977), tuition credits, and tax deductions for private schools.

Aim of This Study

The National Institute of Education (NIE) together with the Council for American Private Education (CAPE), an umbrella group of nonpublic school organizations,*

* The Council for American Private Education is a coalition of fifteen national private school organizations serving schools enrolling approaching 90 percent of the students attending private schools.

undertook a survey of private high schools to provide a national picture of secondary education. The project was designed as a companion piece to a survey of public high schools conducted by NIE and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).** The analysis of data from both surveys allowed us to compare the services and organization of public and private high schools.

A second aim of the current survey was to increase our understanding of private secondary education. Information in this area is sparse. Individual associations (Christian Schools International, Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, National Association of Independent Schools, National Catholic Educational Association, National Society for Hebrew Day Schools, Seventh-day Adventist, among others) survey their member schools to determine expenditures and program and staffing information, but we know little about the totality of private education as an enterprise. The National Center of Education Statistics, which has been collecting data on enrollments, student bodies, and programs in private schools across the country for the past 4 years, provides what baseline data are available.

Concerns about the provision of services in private education are somewhat different from those in the public sector. The public debate about high schools at the beginning of the 1970's focused on the inability of secondary education to meet the needs of its clientele (Coleman, 1973; Brown, 1973; Martin, 1974). Critics commonly accused public schools of becoming too large and overly bureaucratic, and of housing authoritarian teachers and alienated students. Such institutions, many believe, cannot adequately address the needs of the academically excellent or the disadvantaged student. Therefore, the focus of the public high school survey was to examine the extent to which their programs and management do or do not meet the needs of a heterogeneous student population.

Concerns in the private sector, however, are markedly different. Most private schools are considerably smaller organizations than public schools, and they do not have a guaranteed number of students. Consequently, administrators must devote considerable time and effort to ensuring that the school stays in business and remains attractive to its constituency. Despite this environmental and fiscal uncertainty, private schools obviously have much to offer parents. Parents choose private schools which espouse a philosophy similar to their own, where the likelihood is high of the child's receiving individualized attention and an education stressing the educational purposes of parents' choosing. Parents choose private schools over neighborhood public schools when they believe that they are more likely than the public schools to provide the educational experiences they wish for their children.

Questions and Findings

Given the wide range of expectations and opinions people have about private education, we believed it important to describe as fully as possible the nature of private secondary schools and their programs, organization, and management to provide a picture with which to compare expectations and opinion. The first section of the book provides this basic description. Chapter 2 outlines the context for our findings

** The results of the public high school study are reported in the NIE publication *High School '77* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978).

by describing the sample of private high schools from which our data are drawn. The sample was chosen to be representative of the Nation's private high school population. The schools in the sample are located mostly in the East and Midwest and are predominantly Catholic. Although there is wide variation in enrollments (from as low as 14 to as high as 2,563), the majority of the schools are relatively small; with an average enrollment of 450 students.

Although generalizations are usually fraught with danger, we are fairly confident that this sample mirrors private schools across the country, most of which tend to be either Catholic (63 percent) or some other religious affiliation (19 percent) (McLaughlin and Wise, 1979). The generalizations, however, mask a great deal of variation and are perhaps less appropriate for the nonecclesiastical subset of schools.

Chapter 3 describes the kinds of services and programs private schools actually provide. In the survey we inquired into both core and noncore academic offerings and about programs designed to meet special needs, such as advanced placement, remedial courses, and alternative ways to earn academic credit.

Our findings indicate that although there is great diversity in the educational programs offered by private schools and although there are programs offered in some private schools that are not likely to be found in public schools, individual private schools most often serve a specialized educational function rather than a comprehensive one. Private high schools as a whole are marked by their attention to a clearly defined value system and a rather traditional focus on an education in the liberal arts.

Expectations also exist with regard to how private secondary schools are organized and managed. The public perception is that private schools are more open to parent involvement and decisionmaking and have a less cumbersome bureaucracy. To test these views of private school administration, our survey inquired about the management mechanisms used in private schools: the role the principal plays; what kinds of staff are available; the breadth of decisionmaking participation; and the means through which the principal is likely to control the activities of staff and students by use of rules, meetings, and teacher evaluation.

We are concerned with such mechanisms because traditional bureaucratic theory and research suggest that they influence the activities and attitudes of the people working in an organization. According to classical theory, if high schools were bureaucratic, one would expect to find that managers play narrowly focused roles, that decisionmaking is centralized, and that the staff members are specialized. Coordination would be achieved through formal rules, especially rules governing the main tasks of instruction, and through frequent and regular evaluation.

Results from both the public and private high school surveys reported in chapter 4 suggest that bureaucracy might not be the most useful metaphor to describe the organization of either type of institution. Principals reported playing active, broad roles in their schools. They see themselves as managers and colleagues to their teaching staff and feel in constant communication with students and parents. Principals reported that decisionmaking within their schools is highly participatory. Although rules exist governing school management and student behavior, rules for teachers are less common, especially regarding instructional matters. Principals do not conduct

formal teacher evaluations very frequently; nor do most principals often observe classrooms. Such results do not fit with standard notions of bureaucracy.

When public and private high schools are compared, minor differences in management practices appear; but the differences are not so distinct as to define which type of school is more bureaucratic. Private school heads appear to emphasize management objectives over the collegial and evaluative aspects of their role. They also report having more authority and influence in running their schools.

In chapter 5 we explore further the attitudes of private school heads and the goals they have for their schools and compare these findings with those obtained from our public school sample. Most private school heads see their major task as one of developing high moral standards and citizenship in addition to preparing students academically. Private school heads also appear to believe that the parents of their students share these same goals. This congruence between school leader and parent, few reported problems, and a high degree of principal satisfaction are common to most of the private schools we surveyed. Although we uncovered few differences between public and private school principals as far as satisfaction and goals were concerned, it is apparent that public school principals find many more aspects of their job troublesome. The results suggest that the specialized mission of the private high school, their greater selectivity through admissions criteria, and their consequently more homogeneous student body means that private school heads have to deal with far different problems and circumstances than their public school colleagues.

Much has been made of the religious contexts (Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish) of nonpublic schools (Kraushaur, 1972). We have chosen, however, not to compare schools in our sample by religious affiliation. The participating schools can only be identified by Catholic or non-Catholic orientation. Yet these labels can be quite misleading. Many of the Catholic schools are college preparatory independent schools and, therefore, do not belong to a parish or diocese. Consequently they are apt to resemble independent schools in the sample more closely than Catholic schools. The non-Catholic sample consists of many schools associated with a religious or ecclesiastical bureaucracy much like the Catholic school system. Because of this inability to distinguish between religious orientation and secular bent, a comparison of schools by Catholic and non-Catholic orientation would lead to results that could be misleading, or in extreme cases, incorrect. However, although unable to compare schools by religious affiliation, we do provide a closer look at one type of religiously affiliated school, the Catholic high school, in chapter 6.

Catholic high schools are primarily urban and small, especially when compared with public high schools. A great deal of variation exists among individual Catholic high schools, but the students they enroll come mostly from blue collar or professional families. Only a small percentage of minority students attend most Catholic high schools. The curriculum most Catholic high schools offer is well grounded in a core of academic subjects, with courses in the social sciences, religion, and values clarification supplementing this academic core. College preparation and instruction in the basics round off the Catholic high school curriculum.

Like public high school principals, Catholic high school principals are basically satisfied with their jobs. We found many reasons that might explain this high level of satisfaction. Catholic high school heads are relatively autonomous and have a great

deal of authority in the hiring of their staffs and in allocating funds. Few serious problems prevent principals from carrying out their jobs. Furthermore, principals perceive parents as being in agreement with them about the goals of a Catholic high school education. Conflicts over the high school's mission among members of the community rarely appear. Finally, the Catholic high school seems to be doing a good job in accomplishing its academic mission: a large percentage of the students go on to college.

The final chapters of this book examine these results from a number of different perspectives. One of the reasons given for the alleged rigidity of the public school system and the alleged flexibility of private schools is the constraints a centralized bureaucracy is likely to impose on school managers. The burden of the public school manager is further compounded by State and Federal program requirements. Chapter 7 compares the external pressures public and private schools face to determine if and how they affect management practices. Specifically, the chapter examines how the existence of Federal- and State-funded programs, State and district/governing board rules, meetings with district/governing board officials and mechanisms to evaluate the principal affect the school's rules, the number of staff members, decisionmaking participation, the frequency with which meetings are held, and teacher evaluation procedures.

The results are a confirmation of the initial observation that management practices in public and private schools do not differ substantially. They also indicate that, although the bureaucratic environment of public and private schools might differ, these dissimilarities produce only marginal differences in management practices that principals reported using. This suggests that the external demands placed on the public schools by State and Federal regulation might not be as burdensome as many make them out to be. In sum, if private schools are different from public schools the *difference* lies in areas other than in school management.

There are reasons other than freedom from external pressures that are given for the alleged vitality of private schools in comparison with public schools. Many believe that competition in the marketplace provides an added incentive to private schools to be more sensitive to the demands and interests of their clientele. This sensitivity is supposed to, in turn, affect what managers consider to be important in carrying out their tasks. Chapter 8 examines the utility of the economic argument as applied to schools and finds that, while economic theory may explain the behavior of firms, it has limited applicability in explaining the behavior of schools. Adherents of the benefits of competition, however, should be aware that increased competition may have a disequalizing effect. Wealthier parents and students are far more likely to benefit from increased competition than anyone else.

Another benefit ascribed to private schools is their openness to parental concerns. Communication between a private school and parents can arise either because parents *demand* it or because the school believes it is important to *supply*. Chapter 8 explores which scenario is more likely when competition among schools differs. The results in this regard are mixed. On one hand, under conditions of greater competition Catholic schools appear to provide parents with more channels for involvement. However, in other nonpublic schools parents are less likely to demand input into school matters when other education options are available. The authors suggest that

this discrepancy has much to do with the demographics of Catholic school enrollments and the excess demand confronting non-Catholic private schools.

The last three chapters look at the implications of this study for practice, future research, and policy. In chapter 9 Robert Newton speculates about trends that are likely to affect private school offerings and management in the coming decade. The declining birthrate and "back to the basics" movement are two such trends. As the pool of applicants constricts, private schools may need to broaden their standards to maintain admissions. Consequently the student body in private schools may become more diverse. At the same time, the back to the basics movement, already well ensconced in private education, will work toward keeping the mission of the private school focused on academic preparation. Private schools are likely to confront the same dilemma public schools face—how to adjust programmatically to meet a wider range of student needs.

Newton also suggests that forces encouraging greater centralization are likely to affect the traditionally independent nature of private schools. Collective bargaining and the accountability movement may disrupt faculty autonomy in instructional areas and administrative discretion in decisionmaking. These same forces may also threaten the private school's ability to maintain traditional forms of authority against the trends toward an increasingly legislated or mandated basis for institutional policies and procedures.

Since the research reported in this book is virtually the first such study of its kind, it provides the initial ingredients for future undertakings. Chapter 10 examines the survey and its findings with an eye toward suggesting issues requiring further examination. Arthur Powell suggests that the picture the survey provides of private school curriculum needs to be supplemented. Not just titles of what is taught but information about content would round out the image the survey gives of the private high school's academic focus.

Powell also suggests that dichotomizing the world into public and private segments may not be very illuminating. Further work might profitably search for a typology, or some conceptualization of possible differences, that would have more intuitive explanatory power than the terms "public" and "private" provide. To underline this point, Powell refers to Baird's work, *The Elite Schools*, which found that class had more to do with a school's characteristics than did its "publicness" or "privateness."

The author concludes by observing that private schools are useful natural experiments with which to explore the implications of a variety of school climates, an important area of investigation if our understanding of school quality is to be increased. Perhaps a special advantage in observing private schools is their ability to create and maintain their own unique school climates.

The importance of school quality, as something which researchers have failed to measure successfully but which parents seem to be able to identify, is discussed in the concluding chapter by Denis Doyle.

Doyle suggests that in order to address issues of educational excellence in both the public and private sector, researchers and policymakers need to grapple with questions of school quality. Inherent in both the drawing power of private schools and the faith and commitment of many to public education is the tension between excellence and equity. The capacity of educators to deal with this tension creatively

and responsibly in the coming decade is the underlying issue raised by public-private school comparisons.

Current economic and demographic trends are likely to exacerbate this tension. Downward shifts in family size and the increasing tendency for both parents to work full time, for example, are likely to enable more parents to afford private education. Such trends suggest an increasing interest in private schooling on the part of the middle class and the likelihood of continued enrollment increases. As the middle class becomes increasingly drawn by alternatives to the public sector, interest in public support for private education is likely to follow. If this course continues, the probability of some form of Government support increases.

As with any research endeavor, certain caveats must be issued with the results. Our surveys are of school principals, yet certainly there are many other views about what is happening in high schools. As a start, however, a survey of high school principals is a logical source of information. We surveyed principals because we believed they were the most knowledgeable about the overall program and management techniques needed to run a high school, but the accuracy of our information depends on each principal's knowledge and awareness. We assume that answers to questions pertaining to the principal's sphere of operations are the most reliable, so their descriptions of high school programs, organization, and management are likely to be accurate. Questions concerning classrooms, teacher practices, and student outcomes require information from other respondents before their reliability can be confirmed.

The overall picture we present has, of course, been captured at a cost. Every researcher must face the tradeoffs between the general applicability of research results and the richness of data when choosing a research design. We have chosen to fill the need for a broad baseline of information representative of the variety of high schools throughout the country. But there are a considerable number of enticing alternatives that could have been pursued, many of which are discussed in chapter 10. However, most of these research strategies are more appropriate for *future* research that could build on the basic information from this study. Furthermore, many of these issues require detailed data from open-ended questions, probably with a researcher in attendance to probe for further explanations and details. This is obviously not a strategy that is best suited to a nationwide baseline survey.

Two slightly different approaches have been incorporated into our overall program in an attempt to get some perspective on the general data base. First, an intensive case study strategy was used in five public high schools which concentrated on a very small number of issues in an attempt to capture some of the dynamics lost in a more general survey instrument.* Second, the followup research described in the postscript was designed to gather responses from counselors and teachers as well as the principal in an attempt to remedy the top-down focus (and therefore bias) of the initial survey. This step should elicit a much wider range of information and a richer picture of the school. So, the limitations of a general research strategy become advantages when supplemented and enhanced in a comprehensive research program. Because subsequent research will follow, we are optimistic that this first broad survey is a useful addition to our understanding of high schools.

* See *Working Inside High Schools*, by Barbara Neufeld (Cambridge, Mass.: Huron Institute, 1980).

NOTE

1. Definitive numbers regarding private education are hard to obtain. These figures are the best and most recent avaliable. Donald H. McLaughlin and Lauress L. Wise, "Nonpublic Education of the Nation's Children" (Palo Alto, Calif.: American Institutes for Research, October 1979).

December 1980

2. How Schools Were Selected To Participate

The Sample

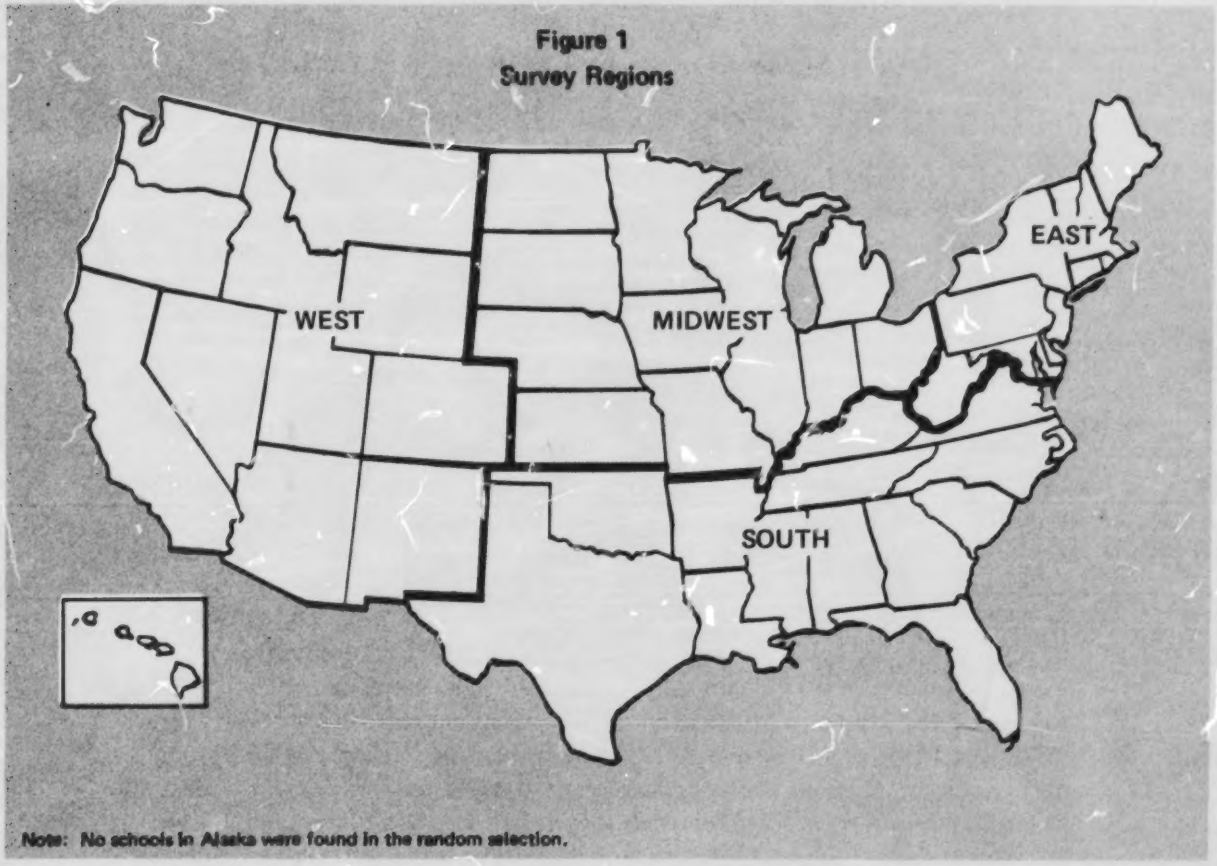
In choosing a sample we took two issues into consideration. First, we wanted to ensure that schools in all regions of the country and in rural, suburban, and urban areas were well represented. We randomly selected 600 private schools, approximately 13 percent of the private high school universe, from 4 regions of the country (East, South, Midwest, and West; see figure 1) and from 3 metropolitan status areas (urban, suburban, and rural), resulting in 12 cells.[1] Second, to ensure that the student population would be nationally representative, we selected schools within each cell on the basis of 12th-grade enrollment, using probability sampling. This method guarantees that the number of schools in the sample represents the proportional number of students in the population that attend schools in various cells. Therefore, the sample represents students rather than schools; students in rural and small schools were not overrepresented, nor were students in urban and large schools underrepresented.

The survey instrument, a joint product of NIE, NASSP, and CAPE, was administered in fall 1977. A total of 454 usable responses were received, resulting in a 75.6 percent response rate.

The Participating Schools

Using the U.S. Bureau of the Census metropolitan status categories, 70 percent of the responding private schools are suburban, 15 percent are urban, and 14 percent are rural (see table 1). However, the Census Bureau definitions tend to underestimate the nonmetropolitan locations: towns within the boundaries of a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA),[2] no matter how small, are considered suburban or urban. According to the principals' own reports of their locations (item 58),[3] 28 percent of the schools are in suburban or small towns, 16 percent are rural, and 54 percent are in medium or large cities. Because these percentages appear more valid than Census Bureau designations, we used the principals' own reports of metropolitan status to classify schools as urban, rural, and suburban.

The private schools sampled are located predominantly in the East (39 percent) and Midwest (36 percent), with the remainder almost evenly divided between the South and West. There appears to be no substantial response bias within the regional



or metropolitan status categories with two exceptions. Schools in the East had a lower response rate, and schools in the West had a higher response rate relative to the other regions in the country. Table 1 shows the number of schools sampled in each stratifying category and the number that responded. Most of the schools are affiliated with the Catholic Church (78 percent) and in this regard are closely representative of the Catholic school population, which accounts for 63 percent of private high schools and 81 percent of private high school enrollments (McLaughlin and Wise, 1979).

Although enrollments in the sample range from as low as 14 to as high as 2,563 (item 1), the majority of schools are relatively small; about two thirds of the schools enroll less than 500 students. Enrollment distributions of the schools surveyed appear in figure 2. Day students predominate (83 percent) in the surveyed private schools, with a small percentage of the schools (13 percent) serving both day and residential students or residential students only (4 percent) (item 4).

Our data suggest that private schools on the whole serve a middle class clientele.[4] Students are mostly white, but a quarter of the schools enroll more than 20 percent minorities (item 52).

Table 1. Responses by Region and Metropolitan Status

Category	Number and percent (of 596) sampled		Number and percent (of 452) responding		Response Rate for the Category
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Percentage*
Region					
East	245	41.1	175	38.7	71.4
Midwest	207	34.7	163	36.1	78.7
South	79	13.3	59	13.1	74.7
West	65	10.9	55	12.2	84.6
Metropolitan status					
Urban	93	15.6	70	15.5	77.8
Suburban	417	70.0	317	70.1	76.0
Rural	85	14.3	65	14.4	76.4

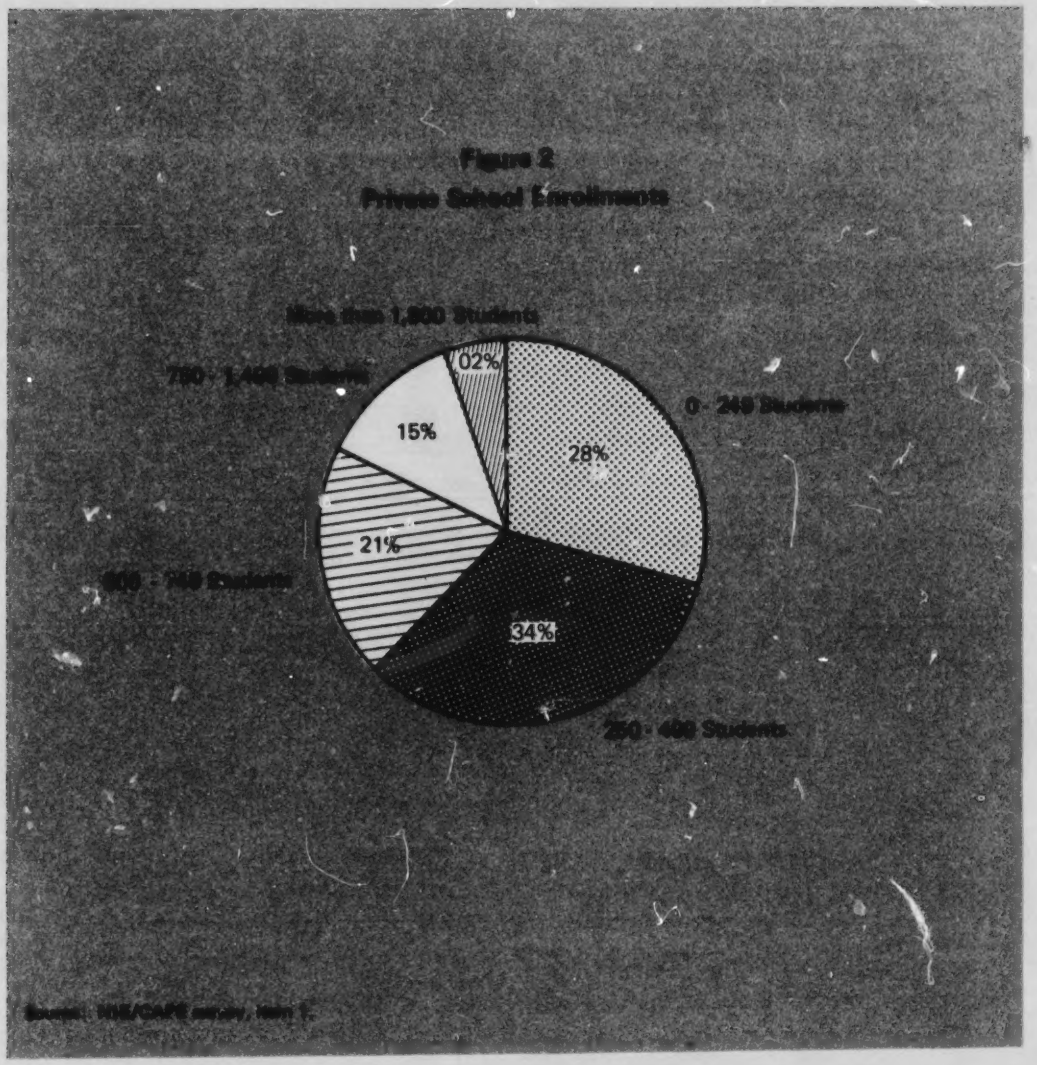
Note: Census designations of metropolitan status were used in picking the sample and are reported here. However, all analyses in the text are based on the principals' own response to item 58 in the questionnaire, asking about metropolitan status.

School heads describe the parents of their students as being on the higher end of the socioeconomic scale. Only 6 percent of the schools serve predominately blue-collar or unemployed families (item 56). The socioeconomic distribution is even more pronounced as far as housing is concerned; in a little more than three-quarters of the schools principals report almost all students living in owner-occupied homes (item 57). Given the predominance of students from families of middle to high socioeconomic status in the private schools sampled, it is not surprising that in almost 80 percent of the schools students receive no financial aid (item 6).[5]

That private schools have a more middle class population is probably due in part to the selectivity of the admissions process. Most schools use either achievement test scores (75 percent) or past school records (87 percent) in making their admission decisions; the majority rely on intelligence test scores (58 percent) or personal references (67 percent). Forty-three percent of the schools use all four methods, with another quarter using three of the four.

Principals and Their Qualifications

The private school heads surveyed are mostly white (97 percent), between the ages of 35 and 54 (72 percent), and male (65 percent) (items 68 and 73 to 75). More than a third have a master's degree, and slightly less than half (44 percent) have done additional graduate work beyond the master's (item 68). Female principals are most



likely to head Catholic schools, which is probably explained by the large number of religiously affiliated women in the Catholic school system.

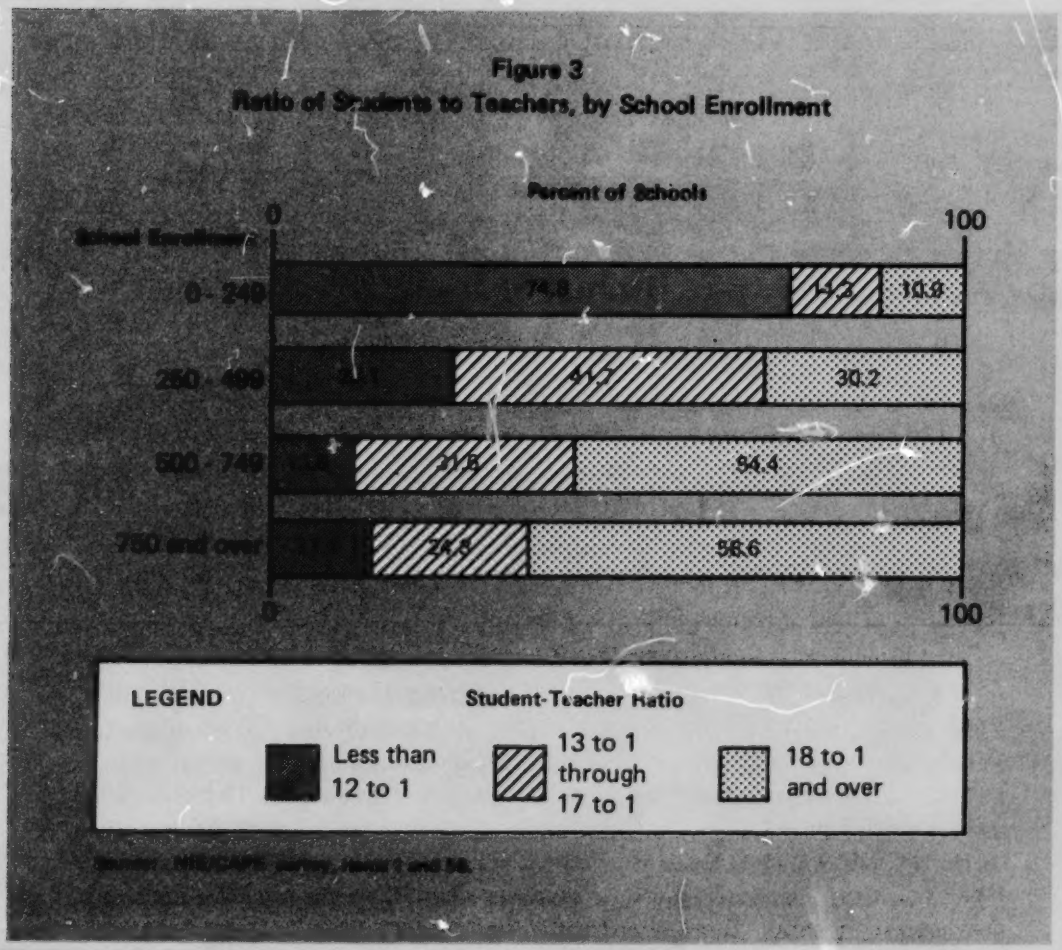
Most principals have considerable experience as secondary school teachers (item 65). Almost half have taught high school for 10 years or more. A comparison of similar sized (see chapter 3) public and private schools indicates that the administrative background of the respective heads of schools is different. The public school principal tends to have more experience as an administrator both in the current school and as a principal of another school. The private school head, on the other hand, has had more experience as a classroom teacher and as an assistant administrator. The private schools appear to have the less stable management because principals report more turnover within the last 10 years.

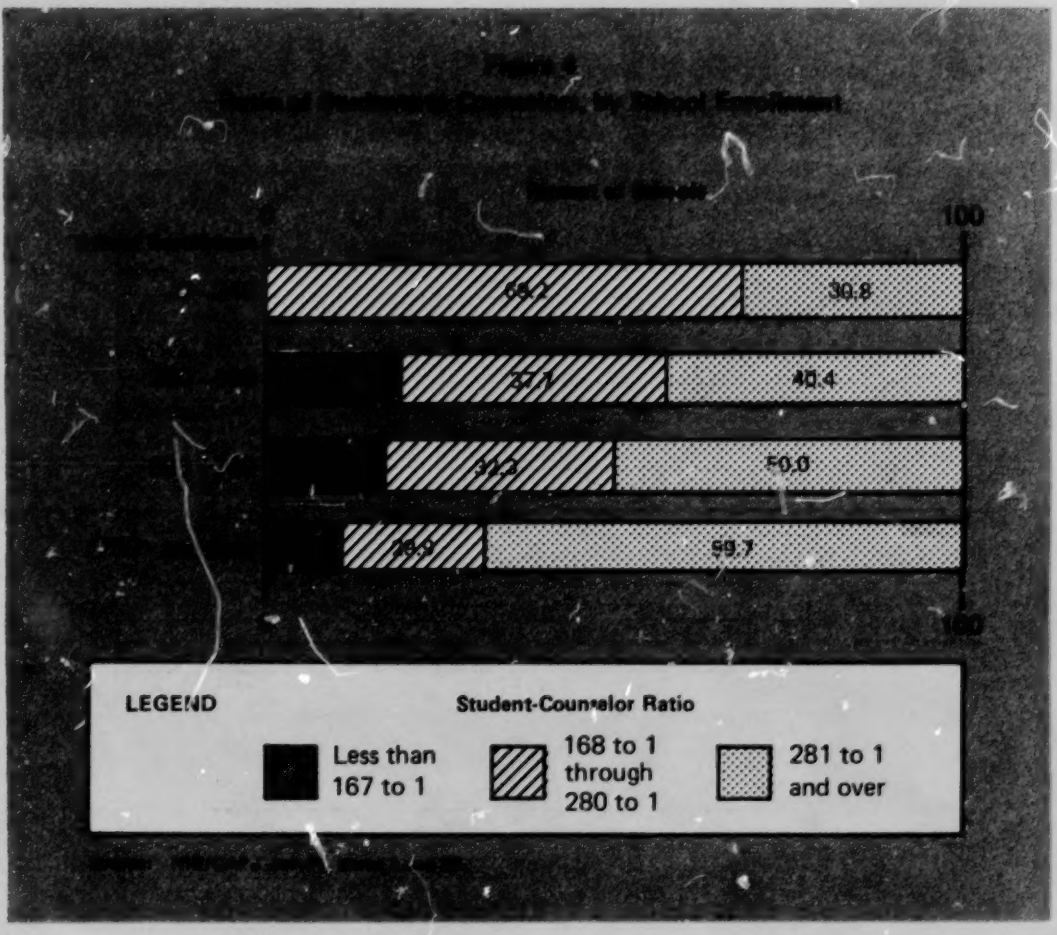
Private School Staff Members

On the average, private schools in our sample employ 27.4 classroom teachers, 1.8 assistant principals, 2.2 counselors, and 1.4 nonadministrative personnel—volunteers, specialists, and librarians. More men than women, 64.7 percent and 35.3 percent, respectively, comprise the professional staff (item 63). Ninety-eight percent are white (item 75).

The average student-teacher ratio for our respondent schools is approximately 15 students per teacher. Figure 3 shows student-teacher ratios by school size. Three-quarters of the smallest schools have student-teacher ratios of 12 to 1, perhaps because small schools, as their larger counterparts, have a core of specialized teachers to provide a minimum number of courses. The small number of students enrolled in such classes is likely to explain the low student-teacher ratio. Larger schools are much more likely to have higher student-teacher ratios.

Our respondent schools average 250 students for each guidance counselor (see figure 4). Again, the smallest schools have the most favorable student-counselor ratios, and the largest schools tend to have the higher ratios. One explanation for





this result is that our survey provides reliable data only for the number of persons, not the number of full-time equivalents. Therefore, our data might overestimate the number of staff (or of counselors, as in this instance), especially in small schools, which are more likely to use part-time personnel.

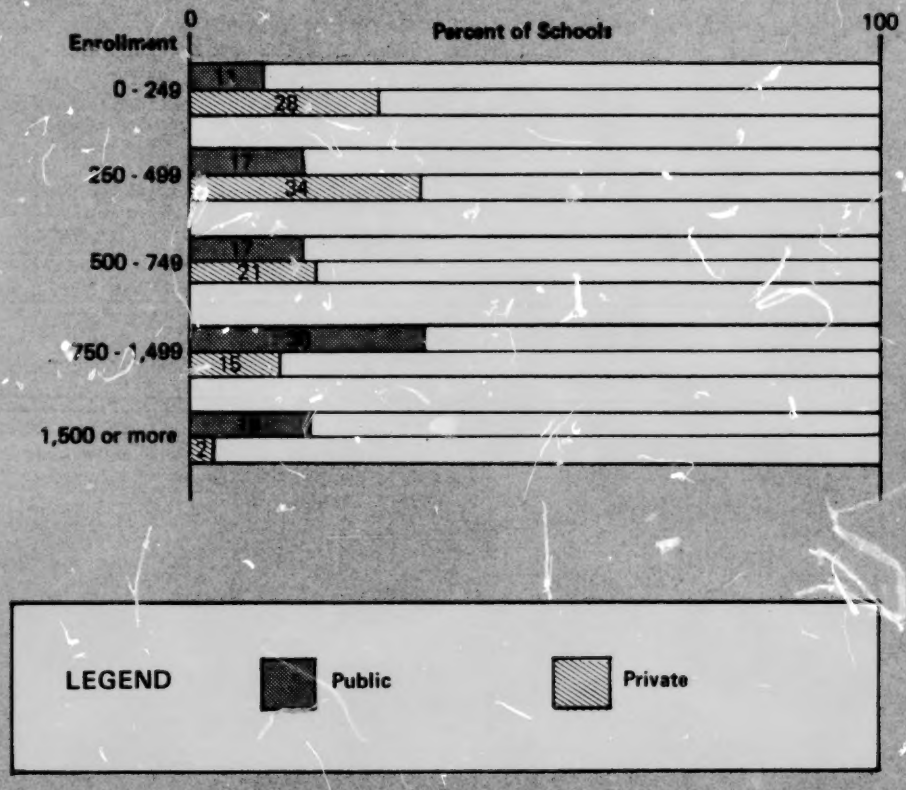
Public/Private Comparisons

When one compares a national sample of public schools with a national sample of private schools the most outstanding fact is the tremendous differences in student enrollments (see figure 5). Private schools tend to be considerably smaller than public schools. Whereas more than 50 percent of the public schools enroll 750 students or more, a similar percentage of private schools enroll 499 students or less.

Private schools also appear to incorporate fewer grades (item 2). Almost three-quarters of the private schools include only grades 9 to 12, whereas 50 percent of the public schools include lower secondary grades as well as grades 9 to 12.

Assuming that the schools surveyed are nationally representative, private schools are relatively small, especially in comparison to public schools, and are located

Figure 5
Student Enrollments — Public versus Private Schools



predominantly in the East. Although their student bodies are as heterogeneous as the public schools surveyed when measured by race, the fact that private schools enroll more students from high socioeconomic status families and select students on the basis of test scores and academic records suggests that their students are much less heterogeneous in other respects.

NOTES

1. The Curriculum Information Center, Denver, Colorado, provided the listing of the "universe" of 4,722 private secondary schools—defined as schools with a 12th-grade graduating class—from which the sample was selected.
2. An SMSA consists of a county containing a city of 50,000 inhabitants or more. A detailed explanation of the criteria used in establishing SMSA's appears in Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, *Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975). Based on Census Bureau definitions, an urban school is one located in a central city (50,000 or more) of an SMSA, a suburban school is one located outside the designated central city but still within the SMSA, and a rural school is one outside an SMSA.
3. Item numbers refer to questionnaire items in appendix A.
4. That private schools enroll pupils from families with higher income and more education than do public schools is confirmed by a recent report from the Census Bureau. Private schools enroll less than 7 percent of families with annual incomes under $15,000, but over 18 percent of families with incomes over $15,000. Similarly, pupils with parents who are not college graduates are only about half as likely to be in a nonpublic school as are pupils whose parents are college graduates. See U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, No. 321 (1979).
5. While almost 80 percent of the schools report that they provide financial aid to students in the form of scholarships, it should be recognized that in virtually all private schools the annual income produced by tuition and other fees is less than the school's total annual expense. Put another way, the costs of educating a student exceed the fee income derived from that student. The difference is made up in a number of ways: by church subsidy; by annual giving programs; by endowment income (a more remote form of contributions); and by such supplementary operations as school stores, evening seminars, summer camps, and athletic clinics. This supplementary income offsets per pupil deficits and is, in effect, a basic form of student aid that benefits each student.

3. Programs and Students: A Specialized Mission

To assess curricular diversity and emphasis, we examined the program offerings in private schools. This chapter compares program offerings, schedules, facilities, and students in public and private schools. The results suggest that the differences between public and private high school curriculums might be directly attributable to a difference in mission.

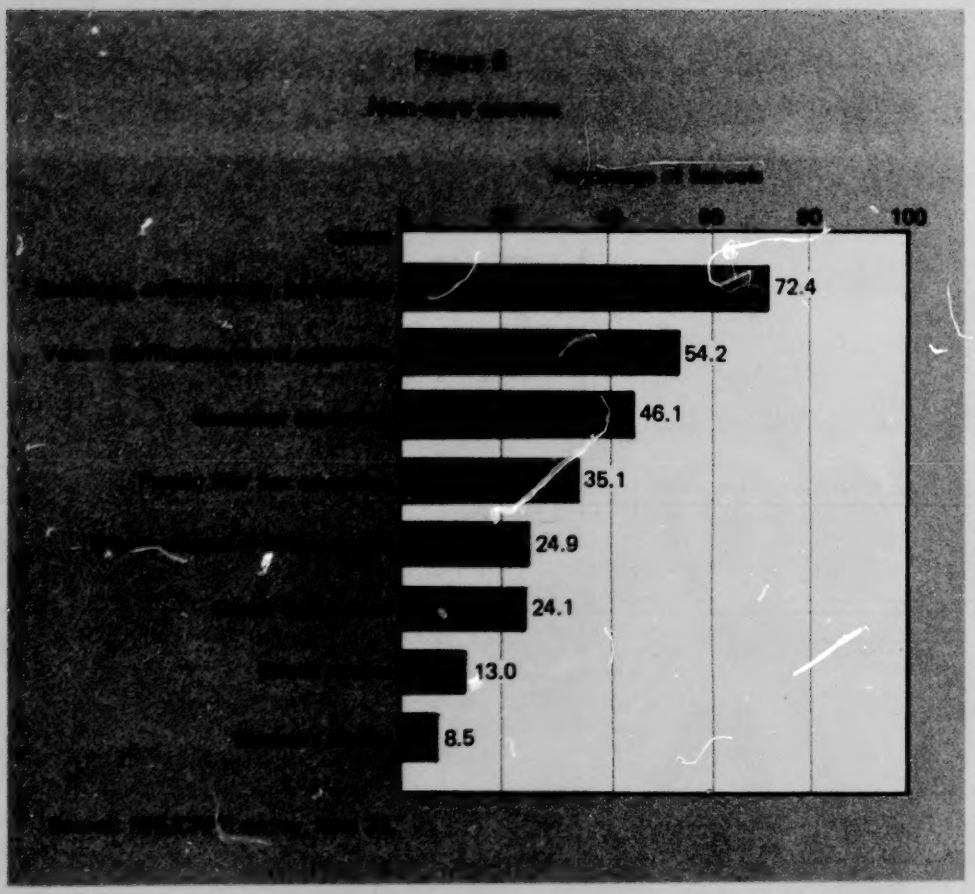
Curriculum

The private schools sampled all have a core curriculum that includes biology, chemistry, physics, French, mathematics through grade 12, business education, and art (item 19). English through the 12th grade remains a required subject in virtually all schools (item 22); and from 50 to 60 percent of the schools offer Latin, homemaking, and calculus. Eighty percent of the schools offer at least seven to ten of the core courses under investigation, with the average school offering eight.

Noncore courses are less common, with one exception (see figure 6): almost three-quarters of the schools offer some kind of social science course, i.e., sociology, anthropology, or psychology (item 21). Other noncore courses that appear with any frequency are values clarification/moral education (53 percent), consumer education (46 percent), and family life/sex education (35 percent). Although 10 percent of the schools sampled offer none of the 8 noncore courses that we asked about, two-thirds offer at least 4, with the average school offering 3.

The most common type of noncore course has to do with religion. In 73 percent of the schools all students are required to take a course in religious studies, which suggests that religion or religion-based courses are very much part of the standard private school curriculum (item 76). In another 22 percent only students of the school's faith are required to enroll in religious study classes. These figures most likely reflect the large number of Catholic and church-related schools in our sample.

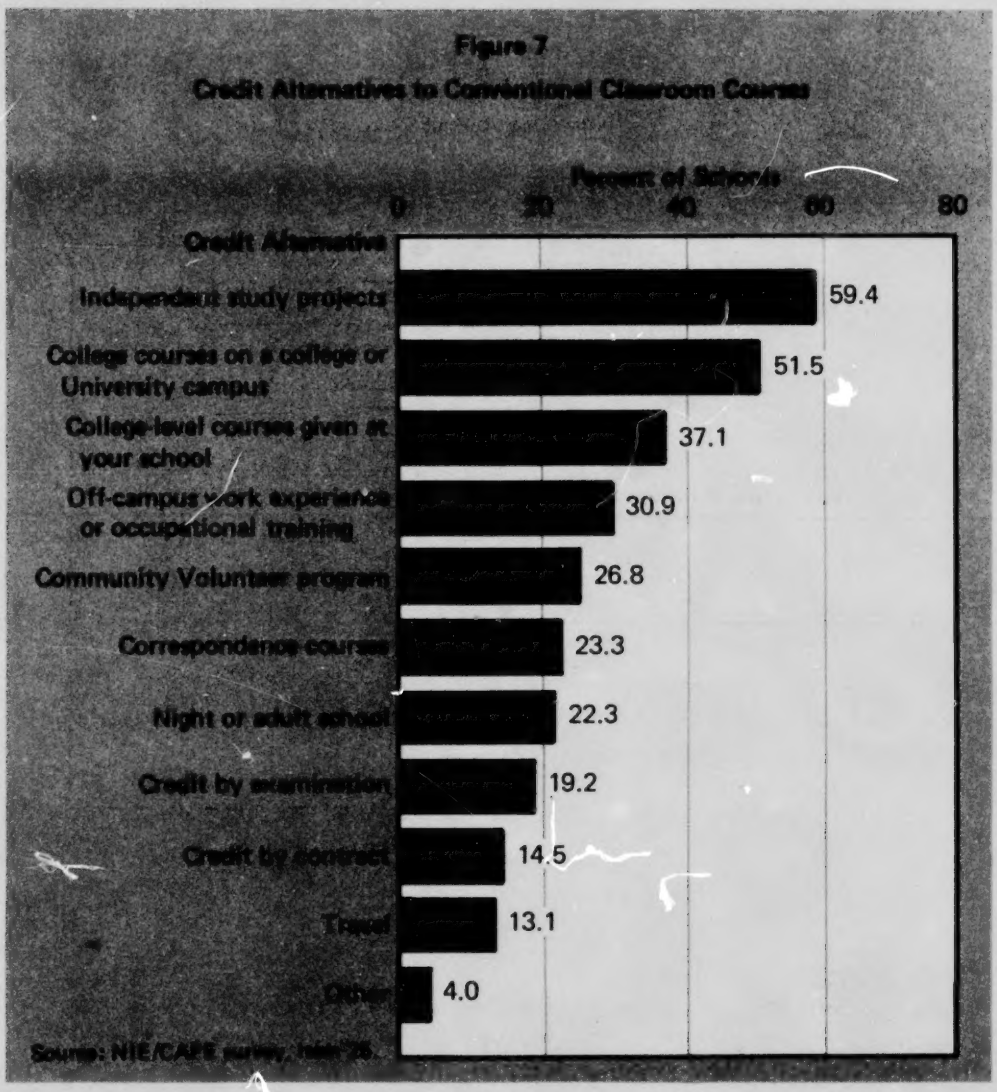
Although private schools do not appear to offer that many courses outside the academic core, they do offer students some choice in obtaining academic credit outside the classroom (item 25). The average school offers 3 of the 11 credit alternatives about which we inquired, with three-quarters offering at least one to four



different options. Over half the schools allow students to receive credit for independent study (59 percent) or college courses on a college or university campus (52 percent) (see figure 7).

The emphasis on academic options we find in alternatives to obtaining classroom credit is mirrored in programs that cater to individual needs (see figure 8). Our examination of 11 different programs that serve individual needs reflects the private schools' emphasis on college preparation and strengthening of academic skills (item 27). In over half the schools students can take advanced placement courses (51 percent) or remedial basic skills instruction (53 percent), and in over a third they can graduate early or attend college-level courses on campus (see figure 8). Less than 20 percent of the schools provide job placement services and 17 percent provide student exchange programs. Programs that meet individual needs, on the whole, appear to strengthen the academically advanced or disadvantaged.

The kinds of programs available might directly reflect student interest. Principals reported that student participation in such programs, when they exist, is minimal. In over two-thirds of the schools, principals reported that no students participated in early graduation and dropout programs, and about a quarter of the principals



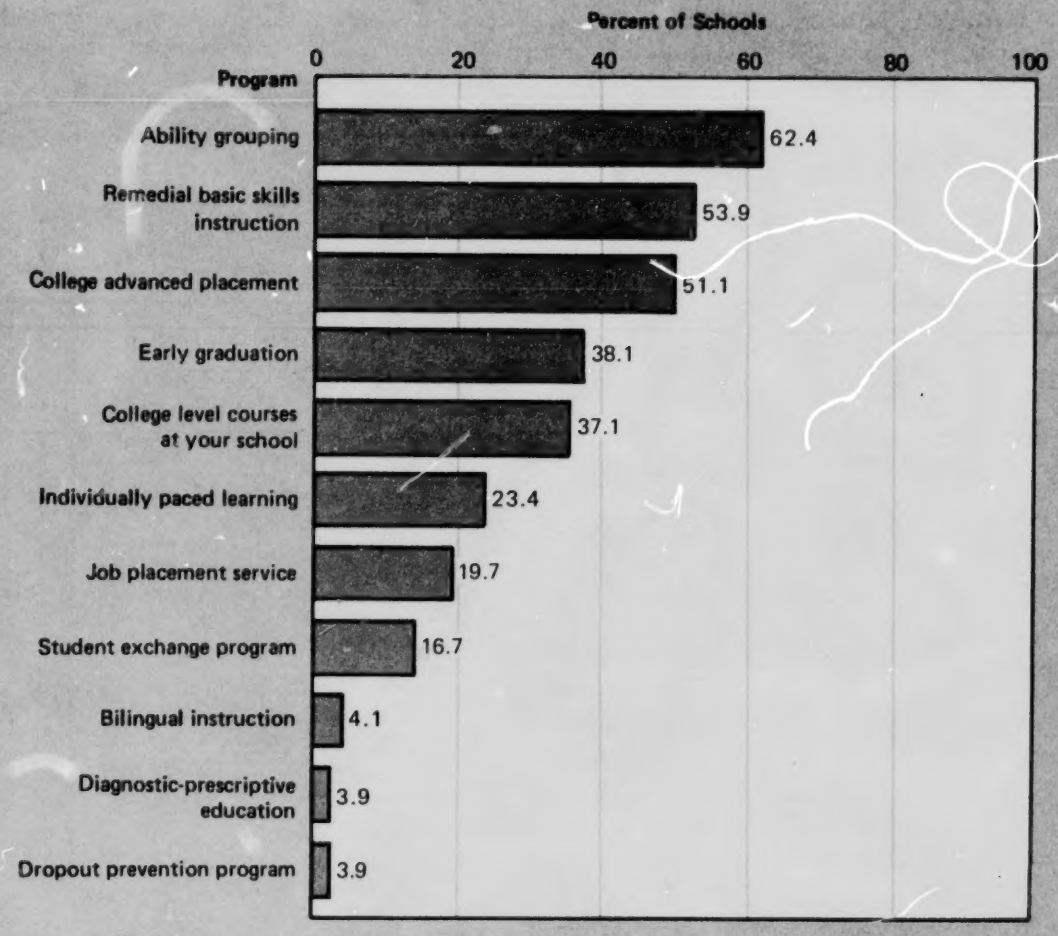
reported that 1 to 2 percent of their student body participated in such programs (item 54). Remedial course activity, however, is much higher. Although a majority of principals reported that no students took remedial reading (46 percent) or remedial math (51 percent), almost a third reported that between 1 and 9 percent of their students took advantage of such courses (item 55).

The tendency for private schools to stress the academic side of the education process probably reflects the expectations of their students and parents. Three-quarters of the principals reported that their students go on to either 2-year (15 percent) or 4-year colleges (60 percent).

Although private schools emphasize an academic curriculum, they have also been affected by a "back to basics" movement (item 51). Sixty-four percent of the

Figure 8

Programs That Meet Individual Needs



Source: NIE/CAPE survey, item 27.

principals reported more emphasis on basic reading, writing, and math skills than was present 5 years ago, which reflects the general trend in public education as well. At the same time, however, a similar percentage of administrators report that their schools continue to expand elective courses (61 percent).

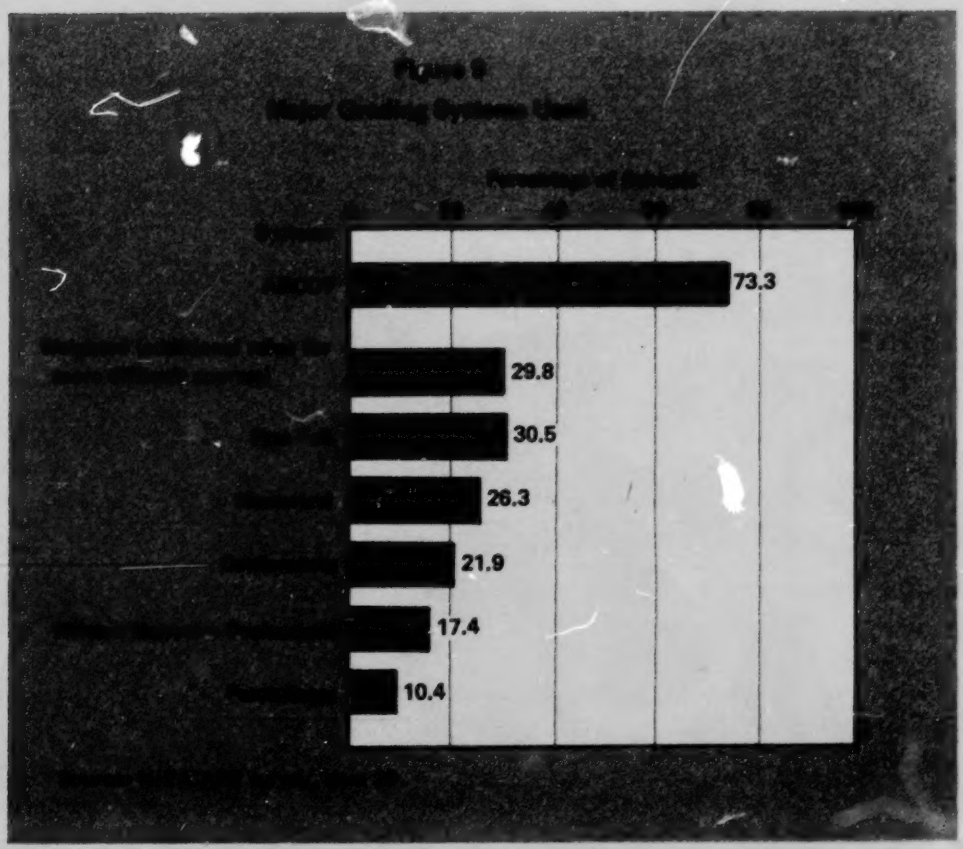
Although their small size, limited resources, and student taste may all account for their specialized focus, private schools use a number of student evaluation systems (item 29). Over 70 percent of the schools surveyed use traditional letter grades (73 percent), but other grade reporting systems are common in 20 to 30 percent of the

schools: pass-fail (32 percent); additional value for more difficult courses (30 percent); numerical (26 percent); conferences (22 percent). A third of the schools employ no nontraditional grading systems, but a third use at least one, and a fifth use at least two (see figure 9).

Program Schedules and Facilities

At least two-thirds of the private schools organize their academic year into semesters, and about 25 percent supplement this system with quarter-length courses (item 8). Three-fourths of the schools use only one scheduling method (the semester), with the remainder using at least two (usually semesters and quarters). Over 70 percent of the schools use a 35- to 60-minute class period. The only other daily scheduling system prevalent is 10- to 30-minute modules, which are used in 17 percent of the schools (item 9).

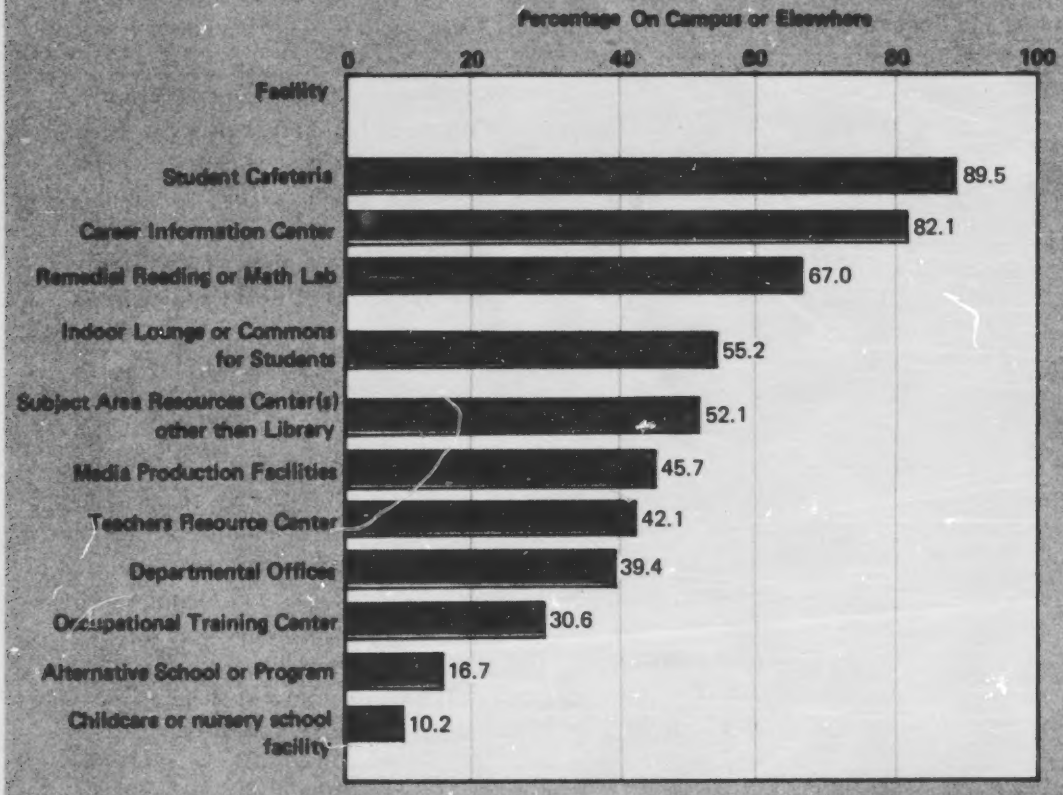
In inquiring about school facilities, we asked about facilities we thought all schools might not have. Since we assumed that all schools would have classrooms, gymnasiums, auditoriums, and athletic fields, we asked about facilities other than these. Most principals report that their school has a student cafeteria (88 percent), a



career information center (79 percent), and a remedial reading or math lab (61 percent). Other commonly provided facilities are an indoor lounge for students (54 percent), a subject area resource center (46 percent), and media production facilities (40 percent). Out of the 12 types of facilities surveyed most schools (73 percent) have at least 2 to 5 different types of facilities; the average school has 4 (see figure 10). Alternative schools or programs, child care facilities, and occupational training centers are virtually nonexistent.

Figure 10

What Type of Facilities Do Your Students or Staff Have Access to Readily?



Source: NIE/CAPE survey, item 14.

Public/Private Comparisons: How Do The Schools Differ?

We have found that most private schools provide diversity through offering academically oriented alternatives. Questions remain as to how this description differs among various types of private schools and how private schools differ from public schools. We can address these questions by comparing the data from our public and private high school surveys. Since such large size differences exist between the schools in the public and private samples, we chose to compare only the public and private schools enrolling 1,000 or fewer students. This leaves us with a subsample of 1,293 schools that is two-thirds public (859) and one-third private (434). Twenty-six percent of the schools are Catholic, and 7 percent are non-Catholic. The proportion of Catholic to non-Catholic schools in the subsample is only slightly higher (79 percent) than the actual percentage of Catholic schools in the private school population (75 percent).

We are only comparing public and private schools as a whole for two reasons. First, separating private schools into Catholic and non-Catholic schools struck us as an artificial distinction. Independent (order-run) Catholic schools, such as Jesuit schools, could be more similar to nonchurch-related private schools than to diocesan Catholic schools. Alternatively, many non-Catholic schools are affiliated with a religious denomination (Lutheran, Methodist, etc.) and could be more similar to their Catholic counterparts than to non-Catholic private schools.

We only compared public with private schools when some significant variation existed on a characteristic of interest. Since most high school principals are white and most schools use traditional scheduling arrangements (semesters and 35- to 60-minute periods), examining differences among schools on such variables would be senseless. To do the comparisons we used a statistical test that ranks all schools in each group from high to low. If the groups are all the same, i.e., there is no difference between public and private schools, there should be very little difference in the number of ranks within each group. If the groups are unequal in their number of ranks, then they differ in some way. We will be reporting the results by identifying in which group a certain characteristic is more prevalent. (Figure 11 summarizes the findings).

We have to remember that we are comparing two groups of schools that differ in fundamental ways independent of their market orientation. First, most of the private schools sampled are in the subsample examined here because most of the private schools sampled enroll less than 1,000 students. Second, the two groups differ in their geographic location. More private schools are located in the East and in cities than in the South and in rural areas. Therefore, we will only report differences when they appear in comparisons of both the original and the subsample of public and private schools. This will help ensure that we are reporting differences that are more a function of school type than of size or geographic location.

Programs

Several patterns emerge when various aspects of the public and private high school curriculum are examined. Although all high schools have a similar academic core

Figure 11

A Comparison of Public and Private Schools Programs, Grading, Facilities, and Student Outcomes

	Public	Private
Core Courses		
Calculus		++
Latin		++
Auto Mechanic	++	
Wood or Machine Shop	++	
Business Education	++	
Homemaking	++	
Noncore Courses		
Family life/sex education	Same	
Anthropology, sociology, psychology	Same	
Ethnic studies	Same	
Environment studies	Same	
Women's studies		++
Values clarification		++
Consumer education	++	
Career exploration	+	
Options for Credit		
Contract	Same	
Independent study		+
Courses at college		+
College level courses		++
Community volunteer		++
Travel		++
Examination		++
Adult/night school	+	
Off Campus work experience	++	
Correspondence courses	++	
Special Needs		
Bilingual	Same	
Individually paced		+
Dropout prevention	++	
Student Exchange	++	
Diagnostic presecriptive	+	
Job placement	+	
Remedial	+	
Grading		
Numerical	Same	
Pass/fail	Same	
Weighted		++
Written narrative		++
Conferences		++
ABCDF	++	
Facilities		
Media production	Same	
Indoor student lounge		++
Subject resource center		++
Department offices		++
Teaching resource center		+
Remedial lab		+
Career information center		+
Occupational and training center	+	
Students		
% 11th graders extracurricular activities		++
% 12th graders extracurricular activities		++
% 11th graders off campus	++	
% 12th graders off campus	++	
% Graduates to 2 year colleges	+	
% Graduates to 4 year colleges		++
% Graduates to Vocational Inst.	++	
% Graduates to Labor Market	++	
% Graduates to Armed Services	++	

LEGEND . ++ Significant at $p < .001$ + Significant at $p < .01$

curriculum, public high schools are more likely to offer courses dealing with vocational topics; and private high schools are more likely to focus on college preparatory courses. This pattern is especially evident when core courses, options for credits, and courses geared toward special needs are examined.

Public high schools are much more likely to offer auto mechanics, wood or machine shop, business education, and homemaking. Private high schools of the same size are more likely to offer Latin and calculus. The public high school options and special needs programs center on off-campus work experience, dropout prevention, job placement, and remediation courses. The private high school, on the other hand, is more likely to offer college-level courses and independent study.

A second pattern emerging from the data is that public high schools have many more offerings for students with special needs, although private high schools provide many more opportunities for students to earn credit outside the classroom. This suggests a certain amount of flexibility in the way students in private high schools can go about learning. Public high schools address individual needs by offering a variety of courses, but private high schools appear to address those needs through a varied approach to the learning process.

Finally, the public and private high schools with enrollments under 1,000 are quite similar in their noncore course offerings, with only a few exceptions. Private high schools in our sample are more likely to offer courses in values clarification, a result which probably reflects the large number of religiously affiliated schools participating in the survey.

Grading Systems

Most public and private high schools use traditional grading systems, i.e., letter or numerical grades. We only compared the public schools and the private schools on this characteristic if a large enough percentage of principals in the group as a whole (public or private) reported using a particular grading system. Therefore, we examined differences among the groups for the following types of grading: letter, numerical, weighted, pass/fail, written narrative, and conference. There were three significant differences between the groups. Private schools are more likely to use the weighted system, written narrative, or conferences in evaluating students, which suggests they have more variety in the type of grading practices they use.

Facilities

When public schools are compared with private schools of the same size, the private schools are more likely to have facilities like the ones we inquired about, especially student lounges, resource centers, and departmental offices for teachers. The fact that the private high schools have a greater range of such facilities suggests that both students and teachers in private high schools are more likely to have facilities available to meet certain special needs.

Students

Although public schools have often been accused of constraining students within the four walls of a classroom, it appears that this criticism is less warranted when public schools are compared with private ones. Public schools are more likely to

have their 11th and 12th graders earning off-campus credit than the private schools. But private schools often have many more of their 11th- and 12th-grade students involved in extracurricular activities. It appears that private schools provide more opportunities for students to participate in a range of activities within the school, while public schools allow students to participate in a number of activities outside the school.

The importance private schools place on academic achievement as opposed to the public schools' emphasis on a range of goals is mirrored in principals' reports of what graduates are likely to do after finishing high school. Public high school graduates are more likely to attend 2-year colleges or vocational institutions or enter the labor market or the armed services. Private schools, however, are more likely to send their graduates on to 4-year colleges or universities.

Summary

The picture of private school programs, scheduling practices, facilities, and students is reinforced by the public school/private school comparisons. Initially, we found that private schools schedule programs and courses in a traditional fashion, that they share a similar core curriculum, and that diversity is provided through offering academically oriented alternatives. Private school curriculums, then, are academically specialized. Where special courses exist, they deal with ethical, moral, and religious issues.

The results suggest that public and private schools differ in the scope of their mission. Public schools are responsible for providing educational opportunity to all regardless of race or class; as such they must provide a wide range of courses for a heterogeneous group reflecting different needs. Public schools appear successful in accomplishing this mission: most of their graduates go on to college or enter the work force.

Private schools, however, seem to have a more limited mission: to provide a specialized education. Private school curriculums are focused mostly on academic subjects. This specialized curriculum most likely mirrors the range of client interests and talents. The student body of the private schools sampled, while from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, are probably academically talented or oriented students from families of higher socioeconomic status. According to principal reports, the private schools appear to be highly successful in fulfilling this more limited mission: most of their graduates go on to higher education.

4. *Private School Management*

Many ascribe management practices to private schools that are considerably different from those employed by public schools. There are any number of reasons to believe that private schools ought to be run differently from public schools: e.g., they are unencumbered by State and district rules and bureaucracies; they compete in a market for students; they are more responsive to parent concerns and input; and they are more demanding in their expectations for students. However, the questions remain about how one might characterize school management in private schools and whether public and private school administrators manage their schools differently.

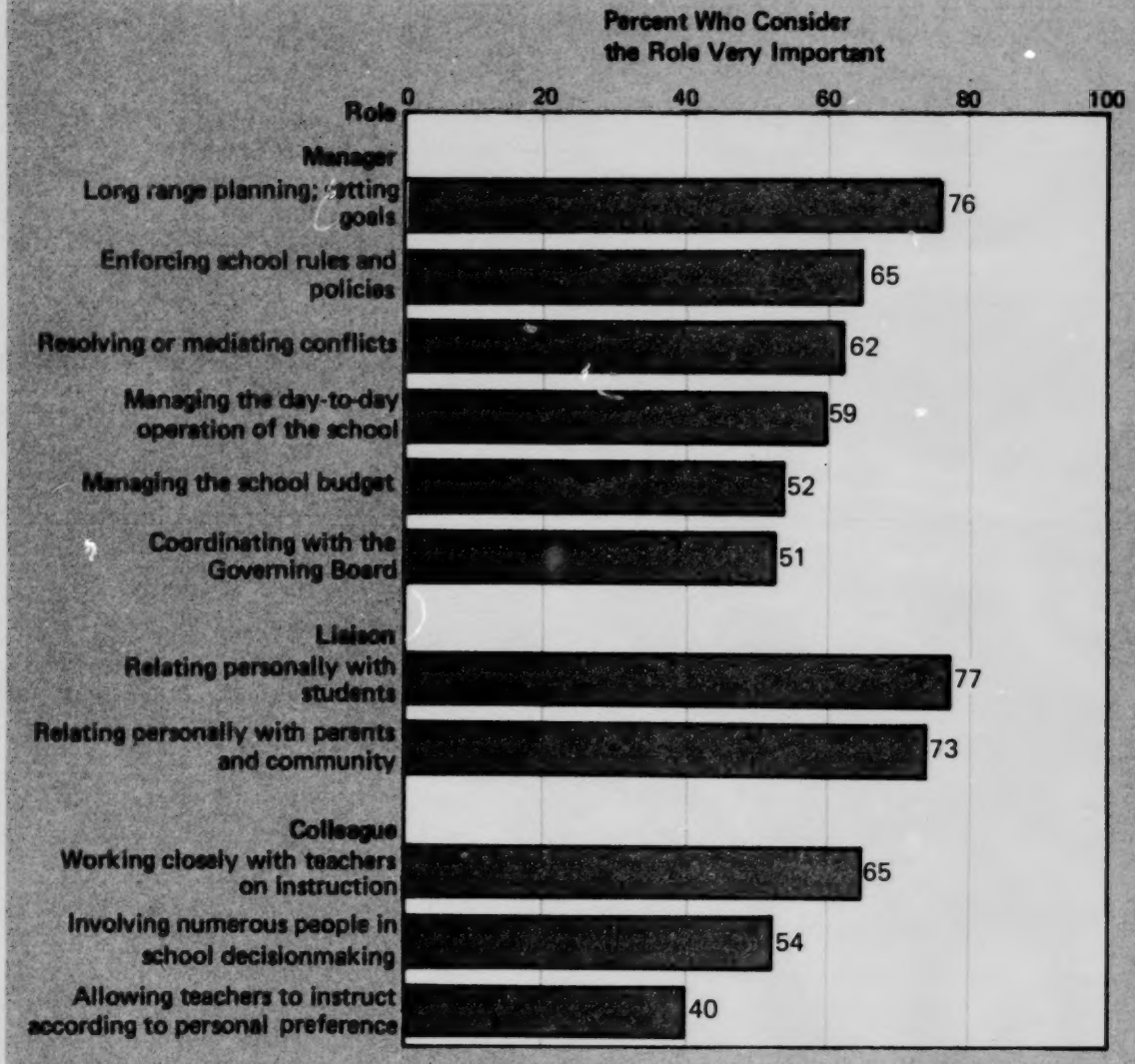
To investigate these issues we examined the degree to which high schools are bureaucratic in the classical sense of the term.[1] The attributes of school management we examined are the complexity of a school's staffing patterns, the roles that principals report emphasizing, and the diversity of individuals involved in school decisionmaking. We also studied the way leadership attempts to orchestrate staff and student activity through rules, meetings, and evaluation. Some characteristics that would be found in a bureaucratic school are a principal who focused on managerial issues, decisionmaking centralized in the office of the principal, and a broad cast of specialists. A large number of rules, especially regulating teacher activity, and frequent formal staff evaluations would also be expected in a bureaucratically organized school.

The Many Roles of the Principal

Private school administrators wear many hats (item 69). They are ambassadors to the community, managers of a business, and educational colleagues. As figure 12 indicates, a majority report that they consider aspects of all three roles very important. Three responsibilities stand out since almost three-fourths of the respondents testify to their importance: relating personally with students, long-range planning, and relating personally with parents and community. This suggests that keeping in touch with clients and in tune with their needs is an important role school heads play.

Figure 12

Principal Role



Source: NIE/CAPE survey, item 70.

Staffing Patterns and Specialized Personnel

We examined the number of departments, assistant deans, counselors, and specialists to determine to what extent private schools use a variety of specialized personnel to provide services to students (item 61). On the whole, the staffing patterns tend to be simple. The average nonpublic school has 1.8 assistant administrators, 2.2 counselors, 27.4 teachers, .9 specialists, and 1.3 librarians. The averages, however, hide the variation in staffing that exists (see figure 13).

Most private schools have average-sized departmental structures: approximately a third have 5 to 8 departments; a little less than half have 9 to 12 (46 percent). Almost a fifth of the schools, the very smallest, have no assistant school head. Fifty-seven percent of the schools have either one or two assistants, and a fifth have three to four. Few schools report having no counselor (7 percent); the great majority have either one (43 percent) or two (26 percent). Specialists, however, appear to be more common. Three-fourths of the schools have between three and six specialists on the staff. The discrepancy between these figures and the number of specialists in the average nonpublic school is most likely due to the fact that the three to six specialists on the typical staff are all part time.

Extent of Principal Involvement in Decisionmaking

How broad-based is participation in decisionmaking in high schools? Generally, the process is considered "centralized" if the principal makes most decisions with relatively little participation by various individuals and groups within the school.

We estimated the breadth of decisionmaking participation (item 44) by listing certain important issues on which decisions must be made and by counting the number of issues in which the principal reported that certain types of people become involved. The issues examined were the following:

- Teacher selection
- Adding a new academic course
- Adopting rules for student behavior
- Determining course objectives
- Evaluating the school's grading practices
- Formulating school goals
- Developing a school budget

The types of people who might become involved in decisionmaking are as follows:

Clients

- Student groups
- Students as individuals
- Parents or community groups

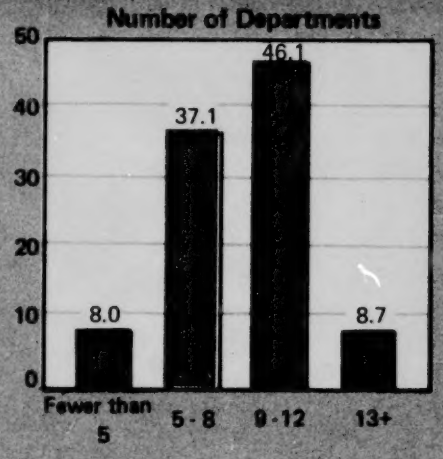
Outside Officials

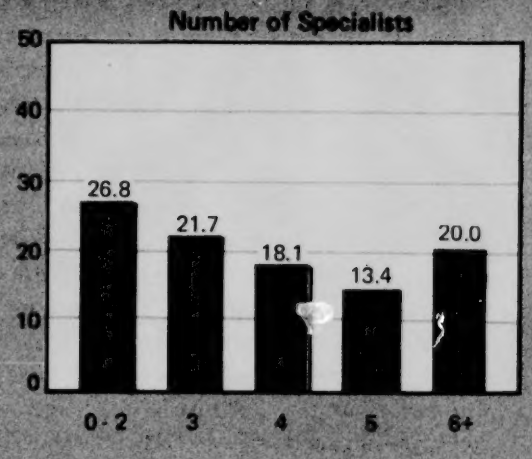
- Governing board
- Chairman of governing board
- Central office administrators
- Superintendent

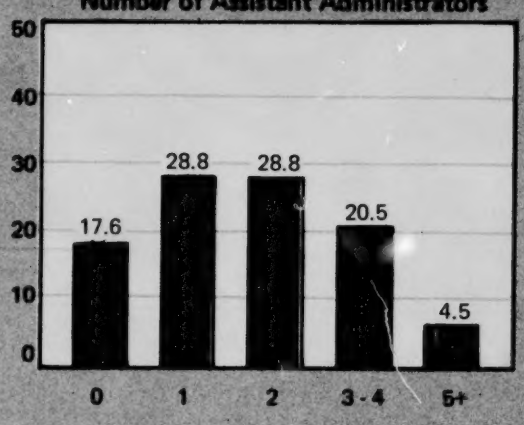
Staff

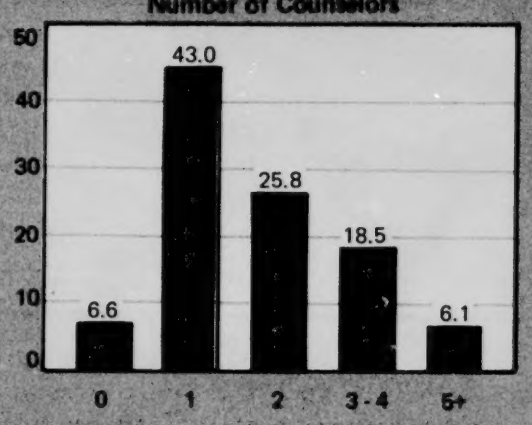
- School head
- Assistant administrators, deans
- Guidance counselors
- Teachers
- Department heads
- Teacher unions
- School policy or planning group

Figure 13
Staffing Patterns









Source: NIE/CAPE survey, items 1 and 61.

About two-thirds of the principals omitted certain categories of decision participants when answering the question: superintendent, central office personnel, teacher organizations, student representatives, individual students, and parents. This fact suggests that such people are less likely to be found in the private education enterprise.

Of the remainder—school board members, principal, assistant administrators, counselors, department heads, and teachers—the principal is by far the most active participant, being involved on the average in six or seven decisionmaking arenas. Assistant administrators are only slightly less active participants in decisionmaking than principals; it is only in budgetary decisions that they tend not to participate.

The remainder of the participants in the decisionmaking process—department heads, counselors, and teachers—are involved in from three to four different decision arenas. Their involvement appears to be targeted toward areas of professional interest. Department heads are reported as participating in decisions such as teacher selection, adding a new course, determining course objectives, and grading procedures. Teachers also participate in four decision areas; they differ from their department heads only by not participating in teacher selection but by setting school goals. Counselors are the least involved, participating on the average in three areas: student rules, grading, and school goals.

Principal Authority as Perceived by Principals

Private school heads report having a great deal of responsibility to run their school (items 45-48). Most have considerable or complete authority to allocate budget funds among departments (93 percent), to choose between hiring one full-time teacher or hiring two teacher aides (97 percent), and to fill teacher vacancies (99 percent). This same pattern holds true with their influence outside the school, except for financial decisions. Although most (97 percent) report having considerable or extensive influence in decisionmaking of the governing board, only two thirds report having much influence on how external sources allocate money to their school. Figure 14 compares the responses.

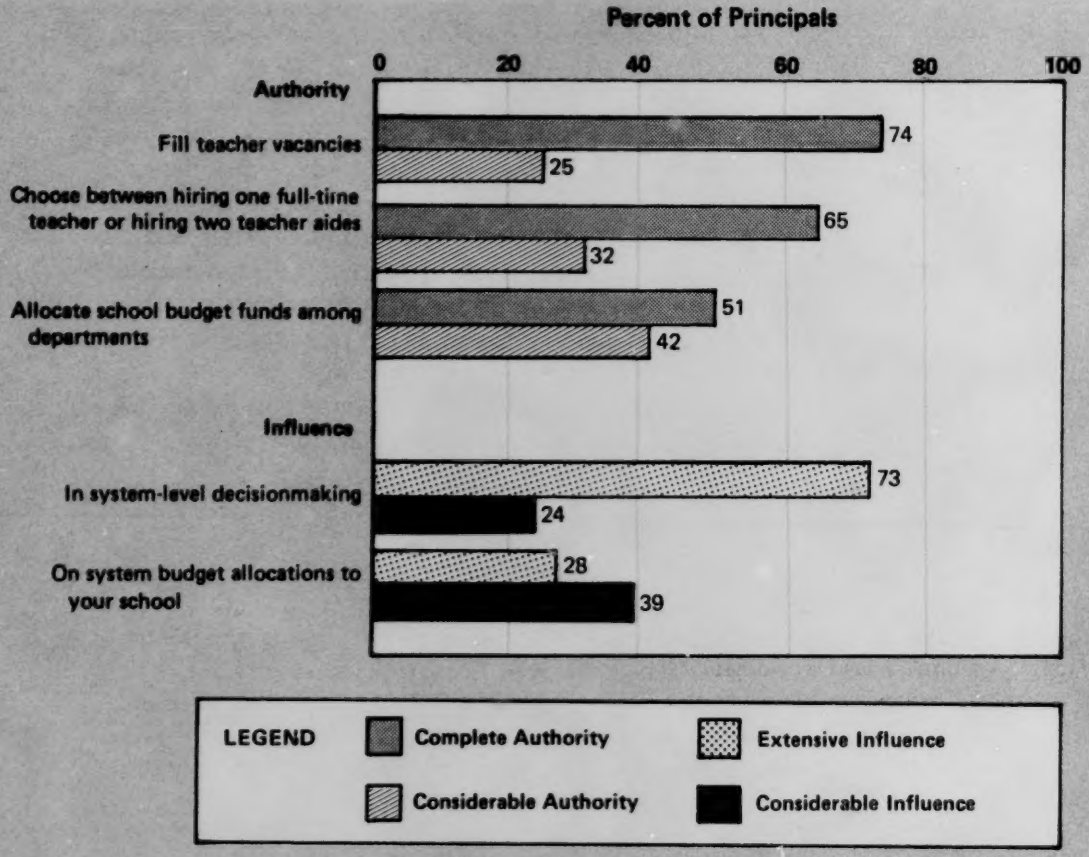
Rules Regulating Behavior in the Schools

Regulating participant behavior through rules is the least personal mechanism of control. The types of rules private schools use were investigated for students, staff, and management in general (items 39, 40). Principals of private schools reported that many rules regulate student behavior and general school management practices. However, teachers fall under somewhat less regimented control (see table 2).

With the exception of hall pass requirements (47 percent), almost 80 percent or more of the principals reported having either formal or informal rules against smoking (96 percent), for dress codes (96 percent), for closed campus at lunch (87 percent), and for holding students responsible for school property damage (98 percent). On the average, the private schools surveyed have 4.2 out of the 5 rules investigated, with 40 percent having at least 4 and an equal percentage having at least 5.

Teachers appear to be subject to a variety of school rules in a majority of schools in both noninstructional and instructional areas. There are, however, more rules about the non-instructional aspects of the teacher's task. The closer one gets to the

Figure 14
Principal Authority and Influence



daily practice of instruction (e.g., bringing an outside speaker, testing, and assigning homework), the fewer rules there appear to be. On the average the private schools have 3.5 out of the 5 rules investigated governing teacher behavior; a quarter have from 0 to 2 rules, and a third have at least 5.

Rules are widely used to govern private school management. Of the nine areas investigated, three-fourths or more of the principals reported having rules in eight of them. The average school has 6.2 of the 9 rules; a little more than 50 percent have at least 7 or 8. The area least subject to regulation is the setting of criteria for evaluating principal performance (44 percent).

Table 2. School Rules Pertaining to Students, Teachers, and General Management Issues

	Percent of Schools with Formal or Informal Rules
Student Rules	
Students responsible to the school for property damage	98
"No Smoking" rules	96
Rules about student dress	96
Hall passes required	97
Closed campus for students at lunch	87
Rules Affecting Teachers	
Noninstructional	
Controlling disruptive students in class	89
Dealing with parental complaints	73
Instructional	
Bringing an outside speaker to class	67
Frequency of testing (Weekly, Midterm, Final)	59
Amount of homework given students	58
School Management Issues	
Determining course objectives	95
Setting rules for student behavior	91
Adopting a new school grading practice	86
Adding a new academic course	83
Setting criteria for evaluating teacher performance	80
Setting conditions for early exit/early graduation	73
Allocating school budget funds among departments, teachers, or activities	72
Setting criteria for evaluating principal performance	44

Source: NIE/CAPE survey, items 35 and 36.

Frequency of Meetings Among School Participants

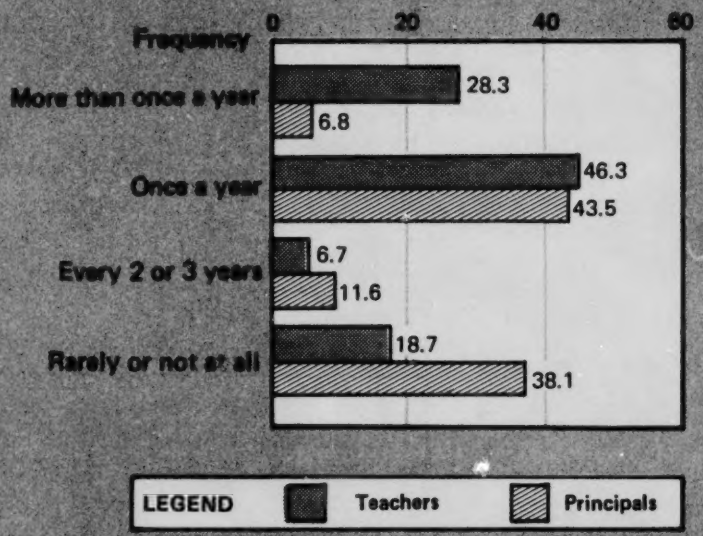
We asked principals how frequently meetings among faculty, staff, and parents occur (item 32). They reported meetings with their administrative staff to be most frequent, occurring weekly in the majority of schools. Faculty meetings take place at least once a month or more in more than 80 percent of the schools; departmental meetings (English and math) occur over the same time period in two thirds of the schools. Other types of meetings occurring in a majority of schools at least monthly involve department heads (49 percent) and the principal's planning group (46 percent).

Principals' meetings are mostly within their own school and do not ordinarily encompass external matters. This fact was reflected both from the frequency with

which principals meet people from outside the school and from the way school heads responded to this question. Much of this variation is probably a function of the systemic nature of the schools—superintendents and central office administrators can only be involved when a system exists.

Meetings involving people such as outside budget specialists, regional administrators, other principals, or advisory board members, take place from once a month to several times a year according to more than three-fourths of the principals. But, as with decisionmaking participation, the low number of valid responses (279-393) to items referring to meeting with people outside the school indicates that questions about meetings internal to the school are more applicable to private schools than those dealing with the larger community. The highest response rate in this cluster of questions (393) dealing with people outside the school is to the question asking how frequently principals meet with principals from other schools. Thus, the private school principal's primary attention is focused on people within his or her own school.

Figure 15
Frequency of Formal Evaluation

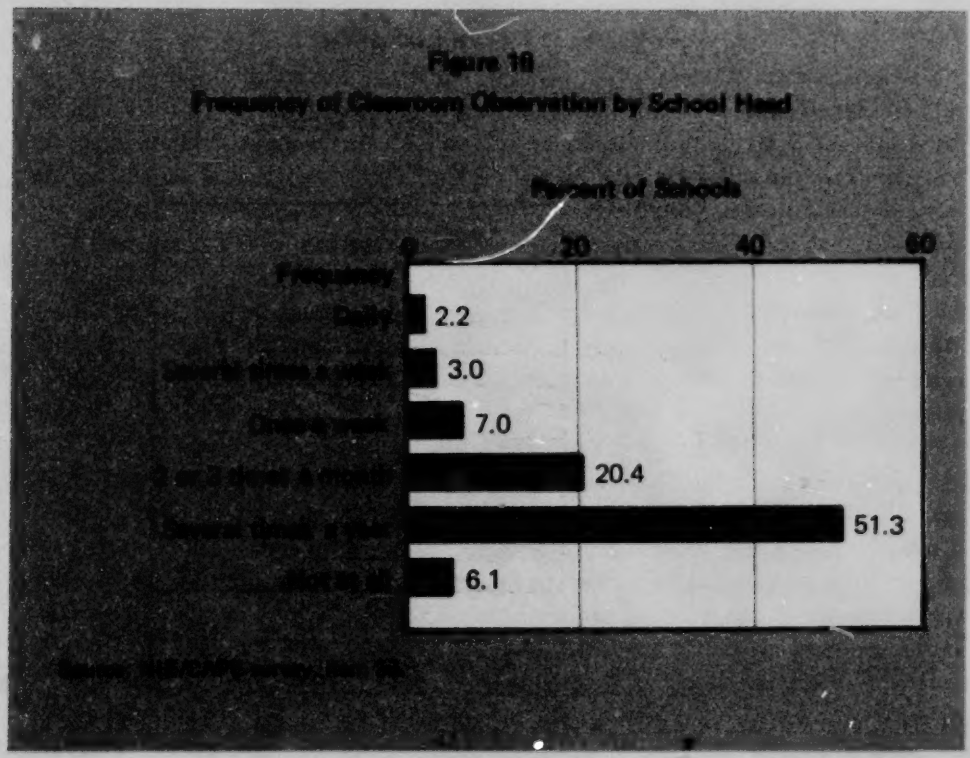


Source: NIE/CAPE survey, item 34.

Evaluation of Professional Staff

The most personal way of controlling one's staff is through individual evaluation. To estimate how extensively evaluation mechanisms are employed in the school, we used the frequency and breadth of participation in formal teacher evaluation (items 34 and 35) and the frequency of classroom observation by the school head (item 36) as measures.* Figures 15 and 16 report the data.

Evaluation for most teachers and principals is an annual event. Forty-six percent of the principals report evaluating their teaching staff once a year, but the other half of the respondents were equally divided between more and less frequent teacher evaluations. The principal shares the responsibility of teacher evaluation with his or her administrative staff and the teachers themselves. Principals often report that department heads (57 percent) and assistant principals (40 percent) participate in the evaluation process; in a third of the cases teachers evaluate themselves. This sharing of the evaluation process could explain why three-fourths of the respondents answered that principals observed teachers in their classrooms only from 2 or 3 times a month to several times a year. Other staff members might assume this responsibility.



*The lack of specificity in item 36 means we cannot distinguish between principals who observe in classrooms frequently, but who may see any one teacher infrequently. We also do not know the extent or importance of the participation by each action in teacher or principal evaluation.

The evaluation of principals appears to be an "all or nothing" event. Almost 40 percent of those surveyed reported being evaluated formally rarely or not at all; 50 percent received a formal evaluation once a year or more.

The school administrators who *do* receive evaluations report that teachers (40 percent) and members of the governing board (38 percent) usually evaluate them. In a quarter of the cases, principals reported that their superintendents (22 percent of that quarter), central office administrators (25 percent), and they themselves (27 percent) evaluated their performance as principal.

Management Comparisons Between Public and Private Schools

Comparing public and private high schools on their management strategies results in a mixed picture. No consistent pattern of differences in school management emerges in one type of school or the other. Rather, the description of management depends on the variable under examination. But the overall picture is one of *few* significant differences, and this presents us with a dilemma. Given the large size of our sample and the great variety of indicators we use, we would expect a considerable number of *inconsistent* differences to appear by chance. Since this is, for the most part, the pattern we observe, we must report particular differences with considerable reservations.

Comparing the Principal's Role

It would be correct to say that, overall, public and private school principals emphasize the ambassadorial, collegial, and managerial aspects of their roles equally. But within the latter two categories, the role variables are somewhat inconsistent in their characterization, as shown in figure 17. Public school principals are much more likely to say they feel working closely with teachers on instructional matters is important than their private school counterparts. This could reflect the fact that public school principals have less control over who they can hire and fire and, therefore, must rely on coaching teachers whose work needs improvement. This inference is supported by the observation that public school principals evaluate their faculty and observe classroom practice much more frequently than private school heads.

Private school administrators are more likely to involve school staff in the decisionmaking arena. This is clearly demonstrated when decisionmaking participation variables are examined. Public schools have less staff and faculty participation in school decisionmaking. Faculty meetings are also more common in private schools. Perhaps these meetings, serving as a forum for faculty and staff, are where the high degree of decisionmaking participation occurs that private school administrators reported. The data support the common perception of private schools as being more open to teacher involvement in ongoing school activities. This does not hold true however, for client participation. When public and private schools are compared parent participation in school decisionmaking in public schools comes out ahead.[2]

There is also a split on the managerial aspects of the principal's role. Public school principals seem to place more importance on the daily operation of the school and

Figure 17
Differences between Public and Private High Schools in Aspects of School Management

	Public	Private
Principal's Role		
Colleague		
Working closely with teachers	+	
Involve many in decisionmaking		+
Manager		
Enforce school rules	+	
Manage daily operations	+	
Manage school budget		+
Long range planning		+
Staffing		
No. of Departments		+
No. of Assistant Deans		+
No. of Counselors	+	
No. of Specialists	+	
No. of Adults	+	
Decisionmaking Participation		
Administrator Part		+
Client Part	+	
Total School Part		+
Authority		
Budget Allocation		+
Hiring Teachers		+
Fill Teacher Vacancies		+
Influence		
District Allocation to Schools		+
District Decisions		+

LEGEND + Significant at $p < .01$ ++ Significant at $p < .001$

on such actions as rule enforcement. For private administrators, managing the school budget and long-range planning appear more important. Private heads might see such issues as vital to the school's survival since they lack the insulation that an outside bureaucracy provides to assume these functions.

Staffing Comparisons

Private schools appear to have more administrative staff; they have the greater number of departments and assistant administrators. Probably private schools are less likely to have central agencies service them and consequently require that staff be hired in the school to assume administrative functions. Public schools however have more specialists and use more adults (aides and volunteers). Public schools can probably employ such personnel because of their extensive support from Federal and State categorical programs, which fund specialized activities such as remedial reading and education of the handicapped. This reflects the broader mission of the public schools as well as the fact that private schools may be ineligible for such funds.

Authority and Influence of the School's Head

Public school principals appear to have less authority and influence in running their schools. They rank lower on every measure in this category. Since both public and Catholic schools have "downtown" bureaucracies, be they district or diocesan, as do some of the schools (e.g., Baptist, Lutheran, etc.) in our non-Catholic group, the mere existence of an external bureaucracy cannot account for the low level of the public school principal's authority and influence. Evidently, the district office functions in a different fashion from that of its private school counterparts, given the large differences in authority at the local school level. This buttresses differences in reported roles, where private school heads reported considerably more emphasis on budget and planning issues.

Differences in School Rules

Public and private schools are similar in their restrictions on smoking and requirements for student responsibility for damage to school property. Public schools more often have an open campus, but they are also more likely to require hall passes of students not in their classrooms. Dress codes are more prevalent in the private schools. The different school rules suggest that each type of school probably faces a different set of needs with regard to regulating student conduct. Court contests and blue jean mores caused public schools to abandon established dress code policies. Yet student whereabouts appear to be highly regulated through the use of hall passes, a mechanism private schools have not found necessary, probably because of their capacity to exclude from their schools students who are disciplinary problems.

Given the greater emphasis private schools place on academic subjects, it is not surprising that *public* schools are less likely to regulate the amount of homework required, the frequency of testing, and more likely to regulate teacher activity regarding controlling disruptive students. The private and public schools are similar in their control of teacher activity with rules about outside speakers and dealing with

parental complaints. The most pronounced difference between public and private high schools is found in the area of general school policies. In private high schools these activities are likely to be regulated by the school, whereas in public high schools these activities are more likely to be regulated by the school district. Although both kinds of schools are similar in the number of general school policies they have, the source of the rulemaking appears to differ.

Evaluation

With one exception, little difference exists between the public and private schools as to who evaluates teachers. Department heads play a greater role in teacher evaluation in private schools while principals play a greater role in public schools. But the frequency of formal teacher evaluation is higher in public schools.

In the evaluation of the high school principal, it is the governance structure that appears to a large extent to dictate who participates in the process. The superintendent more commonly evaluates public school administrators, while the district office, for example in the Catholic school system, and the school staff are more active in evaluating the private school head.

Each of the above points is summarized in figure 18.

Summarizing Management Practices

If private high schools could be characterized as bureaucratic, we would expect extensive specialization and a great deal of coordination through such means as rules, especially regarding teacher instructional behavior, and frequent formal evaluations.

However, our results suggest that the aspects of management we investigated are manifested differently from their operation in a bureaucracy. The overall picture of private schools is of an institution where the principal's role is many-faceted rather than primarily managerial; the level of differentiation among staff members is modest; decisionmaking is highly participatory and decentralized.

Furthermore, although the school head has broad authority and budgetary discretion, he or she plays only a narrow supervisory role. The brief tenure of private school heads (2 to 3 years) suggests that they rarely visit a particular teacher's classroom. Formal teacher evaluation occurs annually or less.

In this regard private schools are quite similar to the public schools we examined. Neither manifests characteristics typical of a bureaucracy. In fact, according to our indicators there is very little difference between public and private schools in reported management practices despite their considerable difference in mission.

The number of differences we uncovered is small, but suggestive. There is more formal staff participation in decisionmaking and meetings in private schools, but fewer specialists, aides, and volunteers. Although principals in both types of schools enjoy equally broad roles, private school heads have considerably more authority. Compared with their public school counterparts, private school administrators appear to emphasize management objectives over the collegial and evaluative aspects of their role. The rule structure in public and private schools is fairly similar, except with regard to student control. What is different is from where rules are likely to emanate.

Figure 18

Differences Between Public and Private High Schools in Rules, Meetings, and Evaluation

	Public	Private
Rules		
Student		
Closed campus		+ +
Hall passes	+ +	
Student dress		+ +
Responsibility for damage	Same	
No smoking	Same	
Teacher		
Frequency of testing		+
Amount of homework		+ +
Control of students	+	
Dealing with parental complaints	Same	
Outside speaker	Same	
School		
Adding a new academic course		+ +
Setting rules on student behavior		+ +
Determining course objectives		+ +
Setting conditions for early exits		+ +
Adopting a new school grading practice		+ +
Setting criteria for evaluating teacher performance		+ +
Setting criteria for evaluating principal performance		+ +
Allocating school budget funds		+
Meetings		
School monthly meetings		+
Parent monthly meetings	Same	
Evaluation		
Frequency teacher	+ +	
Frequency classroom observation	+ +	
Evaluation participation-teachers		
Principal	+ +	
Assistant dean		+
Department heads		+ +
Self		+
Frequency principal	+ +	
Evaluation participation-principal		
Superintendent	+ +	
District or central office		+ +
Assistant deans		+ +
Teachers		+ +
Self		+

LEGEND + Significant at $p < .01$ ++ Significant at $p < .001$

The differences, where they exist, could be due to the different environments that public and private schools face. Public schools are more subject to Federal, State, and district policies, as well as more vulnerable to community demands. For example, State requirements probably explain the large role formal evaluation plays in public schools. The public school principal controls teachers as best he or she can, given union pressures on the one hand and State or district requirements on the other. This hypothesis is further explored in chapter 6.

Alternatively, the differences we observed, such as in student and school rules and the focus of the principal's role, may be due to the difference in mission between public and private schools. As we found in the previous chapter, private schools appear to have clearly identified value structures, with the curriculum designed to achieve specialized attitudinal and academic purposes. We have also seen that the students attending private schools are much more homogeneous in terms of social class than those attending public schools and, therefore, are probably more likely to have an academic orientation. In this chapter we see that in comparison to their public school counterparts, private school heads have substantial authority, that they can select staff to promote the school's purpose, that staff participation in decisionmaking is greater, and that staff meetings are more frequent. In addition private schools promulgate formal policies to regulate students, teachers, and educational issues. This focus on mission and purpose raises questions about the influence of parent and student choice, an issue that is further explored in chapter 7.

NOTES

1. Traditional theory stems from the work of Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958); and *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947). Bureaucratic theory as it applies to schools is discussed in J.G. Anderson, *Bureaucracy in Education* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968).
2. One way to explain the lower level of parental involvement in formal school decisionmaking in the private high school is that parents are likely to question matters related to school purposes, programs, plant, and personnel during exploratory interviews before choosing a school for their child. Once a choice of a private school is made, parents might be less likely to question or become involved in school policy. Satisfied that they have chosen well, there is little they need to do to affect that policy. Chapter 7 discusses the issue of parent "voice" at length.

5. *Principals' Goals, Satisfaction, and Problems*

Principals' Goals in the Private School Environment

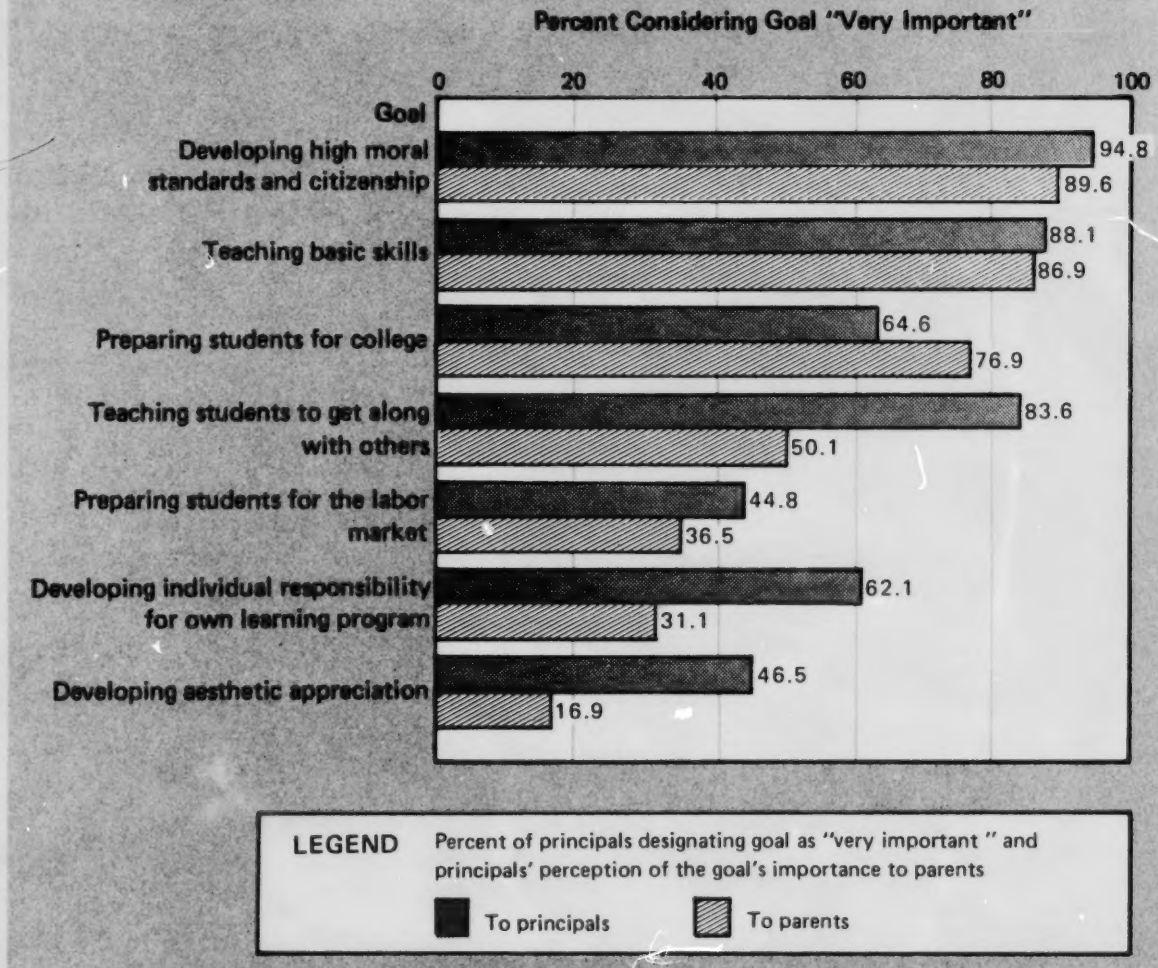
The importance of traditional academic programs, values, and rules emerging from the description of the private school environment is mirrored in the goals principals report having and those they perceive as being important to the parents of their students (item 30). Figure 19 demonstrates that over two-thirds of the principals report that teaching the basic skills (88 percent) and preparing students for college (68 percent) are very important educational goals for them. There is one goal principals hold even more strongly, however, than a solid academic preparation; almost all principals said that developing high moral standards and citizenship is very important.

The principals' perceptions of parent goals for their child's education are virtually identical with their own: in decreasing order of importance they report parents as valuing moral standards (90 percent), concentrating on the basics (87 percent) and preparing students for college (77 percent). The agreement between the goals of principals and what they believe parents consider important is suggestive of a certain kind of philosophical congruity between client and provider. The fact that principals see several additional goals as being more important than parents probably has much to do with their own and probably broader professional expectations.

When public and private school principals are compared on these goals, some differences emerge (see figure 20). Public and private school principals agree that teaching social skills and developing individual responsibility for learning are important. They differ in that public school principals rank higher in the goal of vocational and basic skills preparation, while private school administrators are more likely to report that college preparation and developing moral standards and aesthetic appreciation are very important goals.

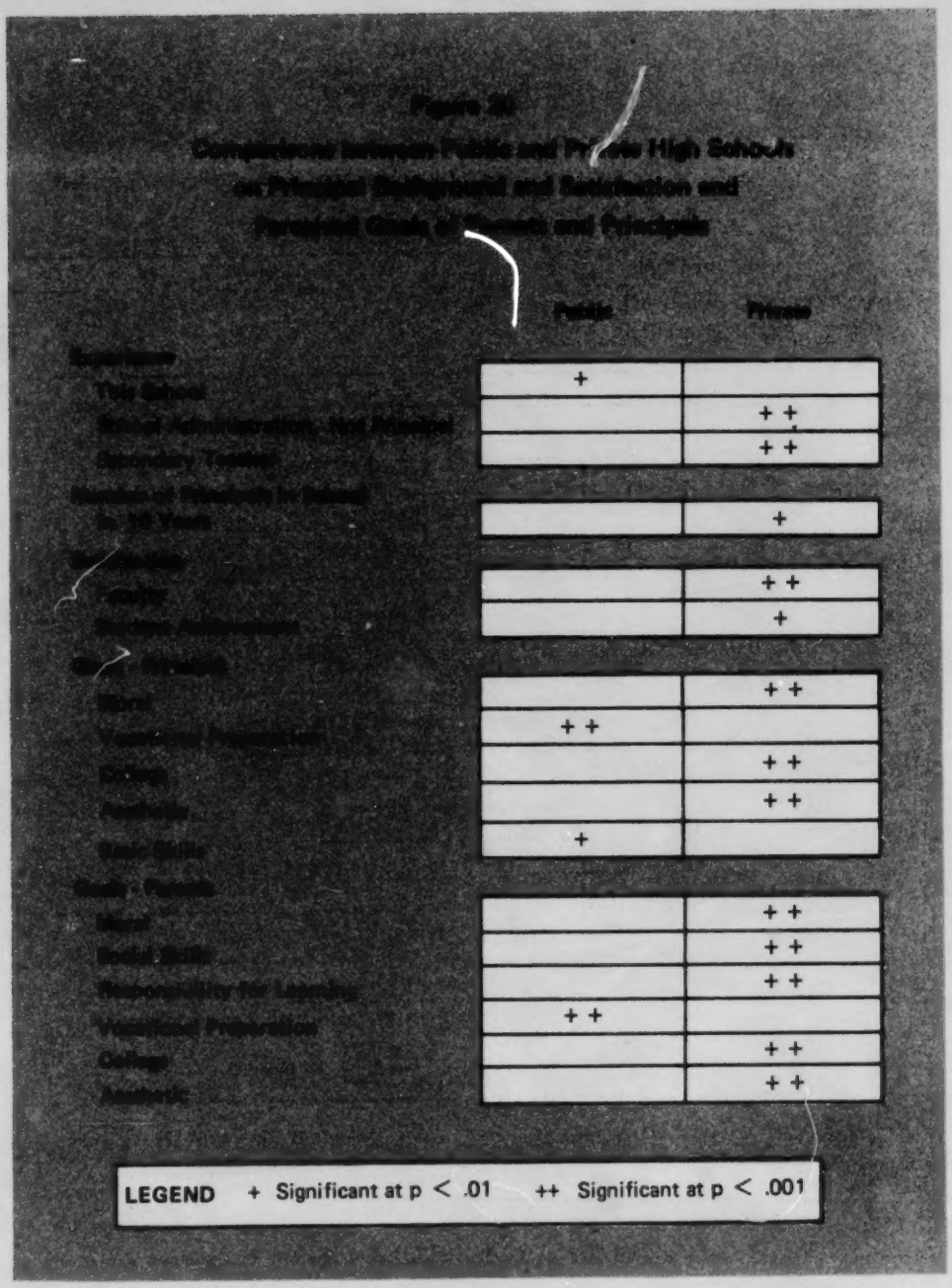
The principals' perceptions of the goals parents have for their children's education virtually mirrors the differences we found between the public and private high

Figure 19
Importance of Educational Goals



Source: NIE/NASSP survey, items 30 through 39.

school principals (see figure 20). Private school administrators are more likely to perceive parents as having a broad range of educational goals for their children than are public school principals. Public school administrators, however, are more likely to report that parents believe vocational preparation is an important goal for a high school education.


Public
Private
+
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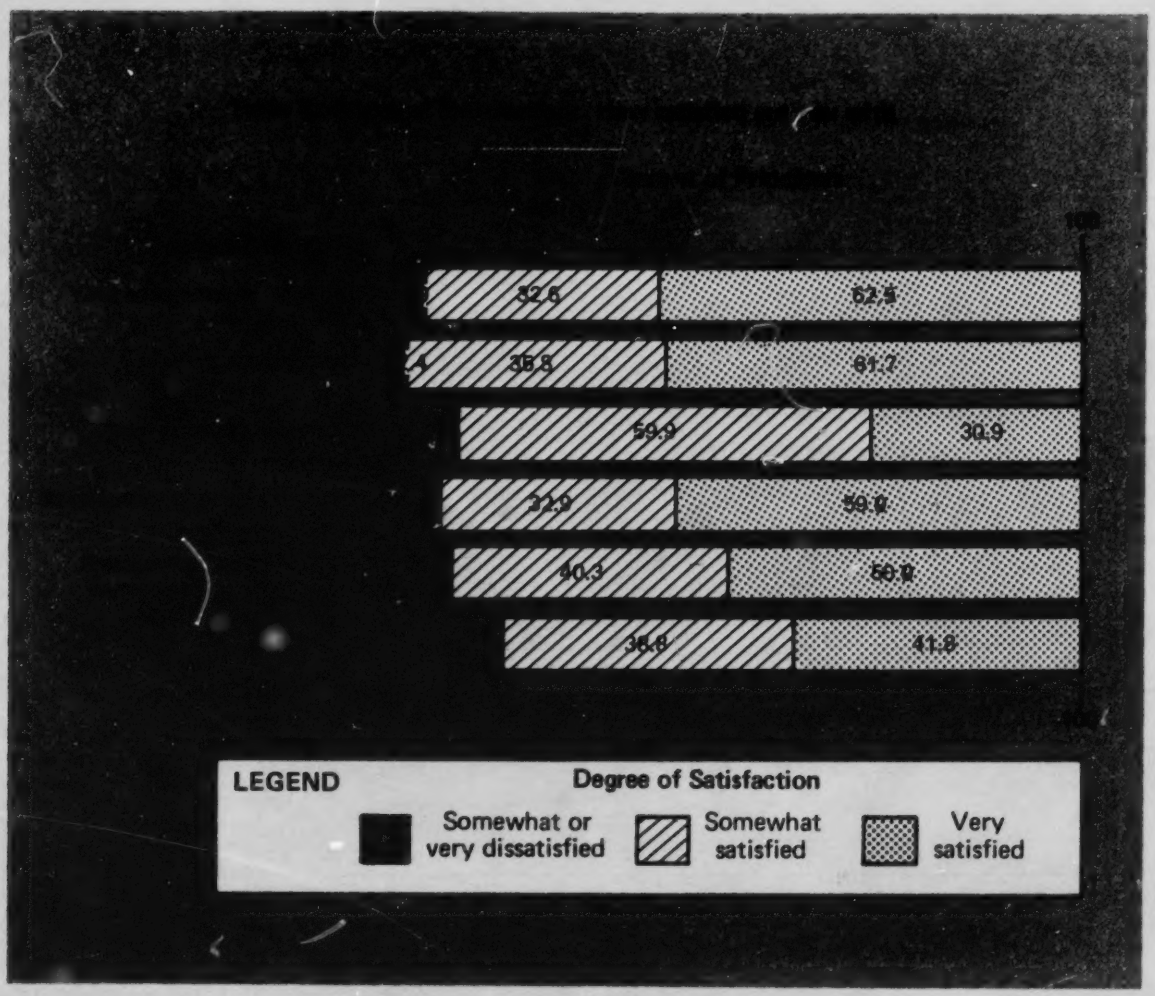
LEGEND + Significant at p < .01 ++ Significant at p < .001

Measures of Principal Satisfaction

As shown in table 3, most private school principals are satisfied with their occupation (62 percent), their faculty (62 percent) and their relations with their governing boards (60 percent) (item 72). In two areas, however, surveyed school administrators are somewhat less satisfied. Only 31 percent are very satisfied with their students' achievement, and only 42 percent are very satisfied with the performance of their governing boards. Regardless of school type, principal satisfaction with the school or governing board ranks low relative to satisfaction with other aspects of their job. Evidently both public and private school principals tend to be less satisfied with the aspects of their jobs over which they have little control.

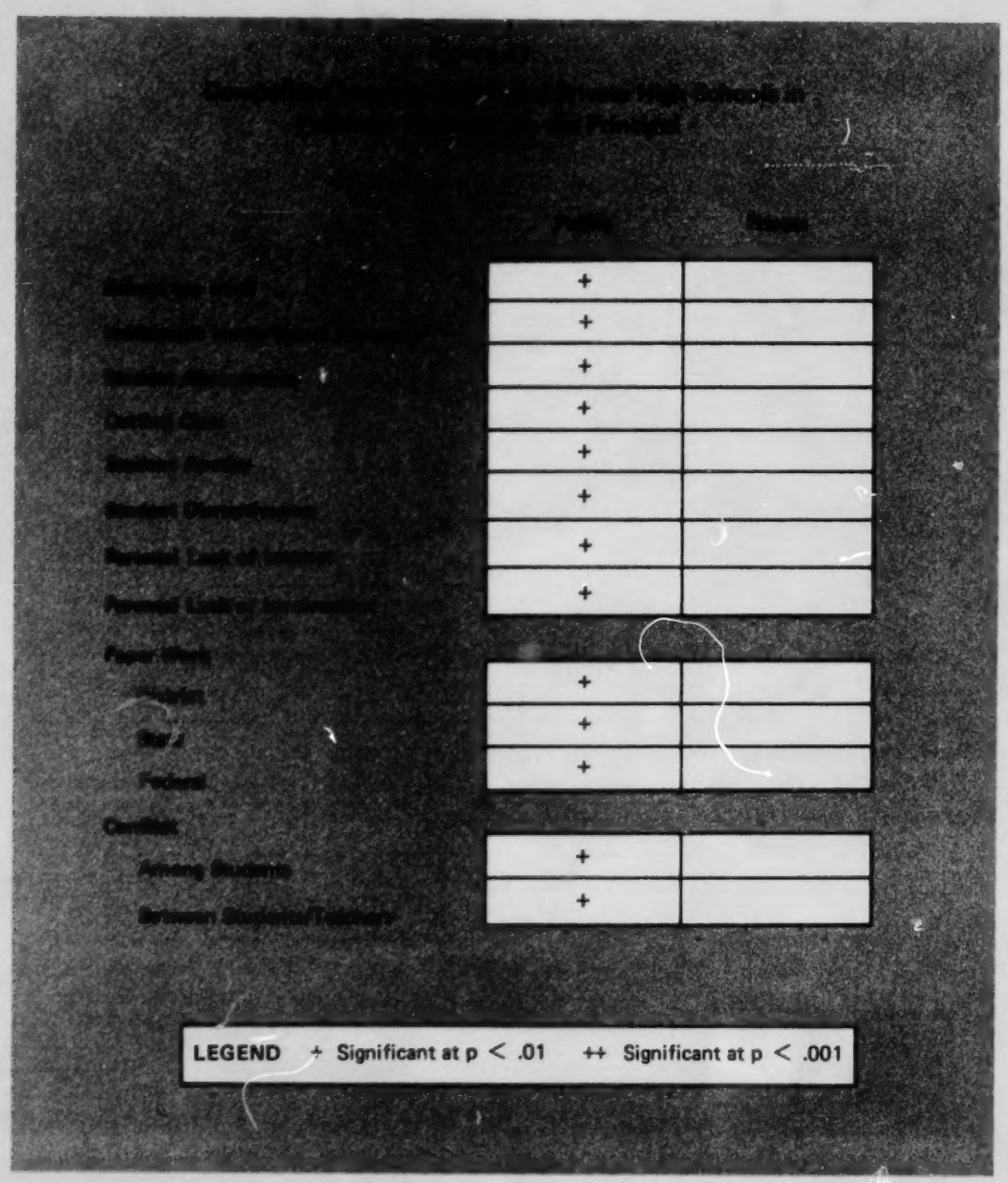
On most measures of principal satisfaction—occupation as school head, relations with the governing board, relations with parents and community, and the performance of the governing or school board—no appreciable difference exists between public and private school principals. There are two measures, however, in which the



private principals are the more satisfied: with their faculty and their students' achievement. The importance of academic preparation and flexible teacher hiring practices might account for that satisfaction.

School Problems--Or the Lack of Them

One reason private school principals might be so satisfied with their job is that few school problems trouble them (see figure 21). No more than 15 percent of the



principals reported having either serious or very serious problems in their schools. There were, however, a series of minor irritants. Evidently a majority of school heads feel mildly frustrated by the small size of their schools (56 percent) and the inadequacy of instructional materials (54 percent). The other aspect of school life that poses a minor problem deals with the principal's conception of parent and student involvement and commitment. Almost two-thirds of private school heads find that student apathy (69 percent), parents' lack of interest in students' progress (64 percent), student absenteeism (63 percent), and student disruptiveness (61 percent) are minor irritants. In a similar vein, a majority reported being mildly troubled by parents' lack of involvement in school matters (58 percent) and students' cutting of classes (58 percent).

Conflict within the school also appears to be minimal. If conflict does exist, it appears to occur most frequently (at least once a week) among students (10 percent) and between students and teachers (12 percent).

Given the selectivity of private school admissions, it is not surprising that private school administrators reported few problems. Furthermore, it is not unexpected that a comparison of public and private schools, in terms of the problems principals reported as being very serious, indicates that problems are greater in public schools, which have less control over their clientele. Student and parent apathy, paperwork mandated by external authorities, and conflict among students and between teachers and students are all greater in the public schools.

Since all schools in this subsample have 1,000 students or less, it is interesting that public school principals are more likely to report that small school size is a serious problem. Evidently it is more acceptable for private school administrators to run small schools than it is for public school principals, who strive to provide a comprehensive program which is more feasible in a larger school.

Summary

Private schools are marked by the congruence in principals' goals and those they perceive the parents of students as having, by high principal satisfaction, and few problems. Again we find that the differences between public and private schools, although slight, can in part be explained by the specialized mission of private schools, their greater selectivity through admissions criteria, and the consequently more homogeneous student body. On the whole, the results suggest that private schools can (and do) choose not to deal with certain students with far greater ease than public schools.

6. A Closer Look: The Catholic High School

Much has been made of the religious contexts (Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish) of nonpublic schools (Kraushaur, 1972). Although we are unable to compare schools by religious affiliation, we can provide a closer look at one type of religiously affiliated school, the Catholic high school. This picture of the Catholic school comes from the responses of the 358 Catholic school heads who participated in the survey of private high school principals.

Our analysis indicates that Catholic schools differ little from the sample as a whole on most of the characteristics examined. This is not surprising considering the large number of Catholic schools and religiously affiliated non-Catholic schools in the sample.

The Demographics

The majority of Catholic schools sampled are located in cities (58 percent), a quarter in the suburbs, and the remainder in rural areas. The Catholic high school is small, especially when compared with its public school counterpart. More than half the schools (57 percent) enroll less than 500 students; a quarter (23 percent) enroll 500 to 749.[1] Consequently, only 20 percent of the Catholic high schools enroll more than 750 students. The average enrollment of the Catholic high school is 493, the average pupil-teacher ratio is 17:1, and the average pupil-counselor ratio is 272 to 1. Most include grades 9 to 12 (86 percent), with the remainder including junior high school grades (9 percent) or elementary school grades (5 percent) in addition to the traditional senior high grades.

The very poor are less likely to attend Catholic high schools (18 percent), but the percentage of schools enrolling children of blue collar workers and some white collar (27 percent), an even distribution of the two (28 percent), or white with some blue (27 percent) is fairly equal. However, according to the principals, the families of most of the students live in either owner-occupied housing (30 percent) or mostly owner-occupied housing (47 percent).

Amongst the Catholic schools there is substantial variation in minority student enrollments.[2] Only 12 percent of the principals reported that their school enroll no minority students, and nearly half (47 percent) reported that they enroll only from 1 to 10 percent. Sixteen percent of the schools have a student body from 10 to 20 percent minority, and a quarter of the schools report enrolling over 20 percent nonwhite.

To enroll in a Catholic school various factors are considered during the admissions process. Most principals reported that school records (85 percent) or achievement test scores (76 percent) are required. A majority of the schools require personal references (63 percent) or intelligence tests (58 percent).

Graduates of Catholic high schools appear to do well, according to their principals. Three fourths report that their students go on to 2-year (16 percent) or 4-year colleges (57 percent). The remainder enter the labor market (16 percent), go to vocational or technical institutes (1 percent), or join the armed services (2 percent).

Slightly more than half the responding school heads (57 percent) are men, which contrasts noticeably with the percentage of male public school heads (98 percent). Public and Catholic high schools, however, are pretty similar in terms of their principal's race. Ninety-eight percent of Catholic school heads are white, and most are between the ages of 35 and 44 (46 percent), with a quarter 45 to 54 years of age. Most Catholic school administrators have a masters degree (43 percent) or a masters plus additional credits (56 percent). Most Catholic school heads have spent many years in the classroom beyond their academic preparation. A quarter (24 percent) have taught between 1 and 6 years, and virtually the same percentage has taught for 7 to 11 years (28 percent) or 12 to 18 years (26 percent). Thirteen percent report they have taught for 19 years or more!

The respondents in this group are almost evenly split at approximately 25 percent having 1 year or less, 2-3 years, or 4-7 years of experience as a principal. The experience respondents have administering their high school is usually the only leadership position most have had. Seventy percent have never been a school head elsewhere, while 29 percent have been a principal previously for 1 year or more. A majority (56 percent) have been assistant administrators for from 1 to 3 (26 percent) or 4 to 9 (23 percent) years.

Thirty-seven percent of the principals reported that their schools have had three principals within the past 10 years; 28 percent reported having had only two. Thus, it appears most schools in our sample have had the same principal for between 3 and 5 years.

The Catholic High School Curriculum

Over 80 percent of the principals we surveyed reported that their school offers biology, chemistry, physics, a mathematics sequence through grade 12, art, and French. Business education is offered in more than three fourths of the schools (78 percent), calculus in 60 percent, and Latin and homemaking in 49 percent. An examination of eight selected[3] noncore courses indicates that courses in the social sciences (sociology, anthropology, and psychology) are most common (77 percent), with values clarification (61 percent) and consumer education courses (52 percent) offered in a majority of schools. Less than 10 percent of the schools offer auto

mechanics or wood or machine shop. The average school offers three such noncore courses. Not surprisingly, 73 percent of the Catholic schools insist that all enrolled participate in religious instruction. The remainder mandate participation for Catholics only.

Catholic high schools emphasize college preparation and remediation in trying to meet the needs of individual students. A majority of the schools offer independent study (60 percent), remedial English (58 percent), college courses off campus (52 percent), and college advanced placement courses (50 percent). A third of the schools offer college-level courses, community volunteer experiences, and early graduation.

More than half the schools offer remedial courses, but few students appear to participate in them. Nineteen percent of the principals said that from 1 to 4 percent of their student body participate, and another 16 percent say that from 5 to 9 percent take the remedial courses. In over a fifth of the schools, 10 percent or more participate in some remedial program.

The ability of Catholic schools to meet the needs of their students appears enhanced by Federal programs. Sixty-three percent of the principals reported that their schools receive money for libraries, and about 40 percent reported that free or reduced-price lunch programs or transportation are also available. Less than a third said that their schools participate in Federal compensatory education programs (Title 1). About 10 percent of the school heads reported getting career education or vocational education money. Almost three fourths of the schools participate in one, two, or three of these programs. Thus, it appears that the Federal government has had some success in providing certain services to students attending Catholic schools.[4]

Grading students unconventionally is infrequent in the Catholic high school. Almost three fourths of the principals (73 percent) reported that their schools use letter grades, with almost a third reporting the use of such other grading systems as weighted (33 percent), pass/fail (30 percent), and numerical (27 percent). Although unconventional grading systems are not that prevalent, most principals reported that their school grades students in more than one way. Twenty percent of the schools use three systems, a third use two, and less than a third use only one.

As far as school facilities are concerned over half the schools have a career information center (81 percent), remedial reading or mathematics laboratory (62 percent), and a student lounge (51 percent). More than a third have subject area resource centers (49 percent), media production facilities (41 percent), and departmental offices and teaching resource centers for the teachers' use (36 percent).

School Management

The Staff

On average the Catholic high school has 1.7 assistant administrators, 2.3 counselors, and 2.4 aides and volunteers. These averages, however, hide tremendous variability. Sixteen percent of the schools surveyed have no assistant administrators, while almost a third have either one (30 percent) or two (31 percent). This leaves almost a quarter of the schools where the principal has three (14 percent) or four (10 percent) assistants. Only a small number of the Catholic schools have no counselors on their

staff (4 percent). Forty-one percent have one counselor, while 26 percent have two or more than three (29 percent). Schools with 9 to 12 different subject area departments are the most common (50 percent); a third have 5 to 8.

Role

The responsibility most important to the largest number of principals is their concern for the student and his or her family. Almost three fourths reported that relating to students (75 percent) and parents (72 percent) are very important to them. In addition to seeing their community "ambassadorial" role as very important, more than half the principals reported that various aspects of their managerial and collegial roles are also very important to them. Making long-range plans (75 percent), enforcing school rules and policies (62 percent), and managing the day-to-day operation of the school are all aspects of their role as manager that Catholic school heads reported as being very important. Similarly, more than half reported that working closely with teachers (68 percent), resolving conflict (60 percent), and involving numerous people in decisionmaking (56 percent) are important aspects of their collegial role.

Authority

Although the school head can call on many inside or outside the school for advice, principals of Catholic schools have quite a bit of authority to run their schools as they see fit. They have complete or considerable authority to allocate school budget funds among departments (51 and 40 percent, respectively), to make a choice between hiring a full-time teacher or two teacher aides (66 and 28 percent, respectively), and to fill teacher vacancies (77 and 20 percent, respectively). They also reported having a great deal (73 percent) or moderate amount (24 percent) of influence in affecting governing board decisionmaking. Only when it comes to determining how much money the school is to receive from outside sources does the school head's influence diminish. Only 26 percent have complete, and 36 percent considerable, influence with respect to decisions concerning the allocation of such funds to their schools.

Rules

Rules regarding the school in general and students in particular appear quite common. Rules exist that govern teacher behavior, but they are less pervasive and are more likely to be informal in the Catholic high school.

The policies governing the operation of the school touch most aspects of school life. Over three-fourths of the schools have rules regarding determining course objectives (96 percent), setting rules for student behavior (92 percent), adopting a new school grading practice (87 percent), adding a new academic course (84 percent), setting criteria for evaluating teachers, setting conditions for early graduation (74 percent), and allocating school budget funds among departments, teachers, or activities (74 percent). The one area in which the school has less formal hold

concerns setting criteria for evaluating the school principal. In only half the schools does such a policy exist.

We asked principals whether their schools had formal, informal, or no rules concerning a variety of student and teacher behaviors. Most principals reported that their schools had the various rules we inquired about and that formal rules were much more common than informal ones. Over 80 percent of the principals reported that their schools have formal rules regarding smoking, dress, closed campus, and student responsibility to the school for property damage. In less than 40 percent of the schools, hall passes are required when leaving a classroom. In only one case (student responsibility to the school for damage) do more than 10 percent of the principals reported that this is an informal rule in their schools.

Rules regarding teacher behavior, on the other hand, are reported less frequently and are just as likely to be informal as formal. The only rule governing teacher behavior that more than half the principals reported concerns controlling disruptive students. Fifty-seven percent of the principals reported the existence of a formal rule, and 29 percent reported the existence of an informal one. Seventy-three percent of the school heads reported that the school has an informal or formal rule about handling parental complaints and allowing outside speakers (71 percent). But in both cases, almost half the principals say the rules are informal. This same pattern is replicated when principals reported on formal and informal rules concerning the frequency of testing (58 percent) and the amount of homework teachers can give (53 percent). Over half the principals reported such rules exist; yet testing frequency is formally regulated in 31 percent of schools, and the amount of homework is regulated formally in 11 percent of the schools.

Meetings

Two types of meetings occur routinely in the Catholic high school. Principals meet with their administrative staff weekly (58 percent) and with their faculty monthly (61 percent). Other kinds of meetings are much more likely to be held several times a year, probably every 2 or 3 months. Over half the principals reported that they meet with the PTA (59 percent), other principals (57 percent), parent advisory groups (52 percent), and regional administrators (51 percent) over this time span. Between 40 and 50 percent of the principals reported that school-level meetings are held with curriculum (45 percent) and budget (43 percent) specialists, and with department heads (41 percent) several times during the year. In over three-fourths of the schools in our sample, school-level meetings are likely to be held either monthly or every few months with people from downtown, across town, or just within their own school.

Evaluation

By and large, most principals reported evaluating their teaching staff formally once a year (46 percent) or more (32 percent). Observing teachers in their classrooms occurs more frequently. Half the principals reported observing teachers several times a year, with a fifth observing teachers every 2 or 3 months. The formal evaluation of

principals, however, is rare. In over a third of the schools (35 percent) the principals reported never having been evaluated. Most, however, (44 percent) are evaluated at least once a year.

Teachers are usually evaluated by the school head (91 percent). In addition to the principal, however, department heads (60 percent) and assistant administrators (48 percent) are also likely to participate in the process. In one third of the schools principals reported that teachers evaluate themselves. In 16 percent of the schools only one person evaluates the teacher, whereas in 27 percent of the schools either two or three people evaluate the teacher. The picture is quite different when considering who evaluates the principal. Teachers are by far the most likely to grade a principal's performance (45 percent), followed by the governing board (32 percent) or central office (30 percent). In a third of the schools, only one person evaluates the principal. In over a quarter, however, two, three, or four people evaluate the principal.

Satisfaction, Problems, and Goals

Most principals report being very satisfied with their occupation (60 percent), their faculty (61 percent), and their relations with their district office (59 percent). Almost half are very satisfied with their relationship with their students' parents (49 percent) and with the school board (41 percent). And if principals are not very satisfied they are usually somewhat satisfied with each of the above. In two areas this pattern is different. Only 29 percent of the respondents report being very satisfied with the achievement of their students, while 61 percent are somewhat satisfied. Additionally almost a fifth (19 percent) are somewhat or very dissatisfied with their school board. It appears that, in areas where principals have little control, they are likely to report being moderately dissatisfied.

One reason Catholic school heads are so likely to be satisfied with their jobs and their school is that they are unlikely to perceive their school as having many problems. We asked principals about the seriousness of problems they might confront, such as the school's size; inadequate instructional materials; the involvement of the faculty, student, and parents; and about interference from the Federal or State governments or local governing bodies. In only a handful of instances did principals report having serious or very serious problems. Eighteen percent reported being troubled with the lack of parent involvement in school affairs, 15 percent felt that teacher turnover was a serious or very serious problem, and 12 percent reported that they thought their school was too small. Around 10 percent of the principals reported that not enough counselors (11 percent), State paperwork (10 percent), and student apathy (9 percent) were serious or very serious problems.

Furthermore, principals in less than a fifth of the schools reported conflict once a week or daily between teachers and students (17 percent) or among students (13 percent). The small number of principals reporting that serious or very serious problems with any of the issues we inquired about suggests that either their job as school head is much easier than that of their public school counterparts or that the issues we investigated were not that troublesome or that the school climate and procedures reduce these problems.

Another reason Catholic school heads might be so satisfied with their jobs could have to do with the congruence between principals' goals and those they perceive parents of their students as having. Most principals reported that developing high moral standards and citizenship (96 percent), teaching basic skills (87 percent), and teaching students to get along with others (86 percent) are very important to them as educational goals. For two thirds, preparing students for college (67 percent) and developing individual responsibility for one's own learning (64 percent) are very important. Less than 50 percent reported preparing students for the world of work or developing aesthetic appreciation (48 percent) are very important.

There is little deviation when rating principals' goals and those they perceive the parents of their students to have. Whereas principals rank social development ahead of college preparation, principals perceive parents as reversing that importance. Similarly, while principals rate teaching individual responsibility ahead of providing vocational preparation, they perceive parents as reversing that order of priority.

Summary

Catholic high schools are primarily urban and small especially when compared with public high schools. Although a great deal of variation exists among individual Catholic high schools, the students they enroll come mostly from blue collar or professional families. Only a small percentage of minority students attend most Catholic high schools.

The curriculum most Catholic high schools offer is well grounded in a core of academic subjects. Courses in the social sciences, religion, and values clarification supplement this academic core. College preparation and instruction in the basics round off the Catholic high school curriculum.

Like public high school principals, Catholic high school principals are basically satisfied with their jobs. We found many reasons that might explain this high level of satisfaction. Catholic high school heads are relatively autonomous and have a great deal of authority in the hiring of their staffs and in allocating funds. Few serious problems prevent principals from carrying out their jobs. Furthermore, principals perceive parents in agreement with them about the goals of a Catholic high school education. Conflict over the high school's mission among members of the community appear rare. Finally, the Catholic high school seems to be doing a good job in accomplishing its academic mission: A large percentage of the students go on to college.

NOTES

1. Our sample resembles the size distribution of Catholic high schools across the country. See Mahar, p. XI.
2. While Catholic high schools enrolled 5 percent more minorities in 1978-1979 than they did 10 years ago, the percent minority attending Catholic high schools remains at 18.6 percent. See Mahar, p. xvii.
3. The eight courses include family life/sex education, values clarification, career exploration, ethnic studies, women's studies, consumer education, environmental or ocean studies, and sociology, anthropology, or psychology.

4. These findings are similar to those reported by NCES for all private schools. Nearly all Catholic schools, along with nearly half of other nonpublic schools, participate in Title IV-B programs, including laboratory resources, etc. One half of the Catholic schools and one seventh of other nonpublic schools participate in Title I programs. Nearly three in four Catholic schools and over one third of other nonpublic schools participate in school lunch or special milk programs. See Donald H. McLaughlin and Lauress L. Wise, "Non-public Education of the Nation's Children," (Palo Alto, Calif.: American Institutes of Research, 1979).

7. *Another View of School Management**

We have seen that while management practices are similar in public and private high schools, they do differ in some important respects. The next two chapters assess the empirical validity of reasons commonly alleged to explain these differences. This chapter examines the effects of environmental pressures on the patterns of management practices and assesses their utility in explaining differences in management practices between public and private schools.

The Environment—An Important Factor

There are at least two major reasons to expect the environment to affect how both public and private schools are managed. As a previous chapter suggests, neither type of school appears to be run much like a bureaucracy. However, even if the organization of a public high school does not conform to this image empirically, many would allege that the public school's management is strongly affected by its bureaucratic context; the school district, the State, and the Federal Government individually and collectively determine the responsibilities of the local school.

Research done in many types of business organizations[1] has found that they change when faced with environmental contingencies such as decreasing demand, increasing competition, shortages, and the like. These contingencies are thought to make work relations, and especially management practices, more complex. If schools respond to their environments as businesses seem to, we would expect to find environmental pressures and demands affecting how schools are run. For example, a school receiving funding for a particular State program might add personnel to meet program requirements—and perhaps administrators, to keep in closer touch with classroom procedures through more frequent evaluations. Similarly some State programs mandate the establishment of advisory groups. This results in school administrators involving more people in school-level decisionmaking. In sum, there are any number of examples to suggest that mandates, policies, and regulations from

* This chapter was written by E. Ann Stackhouse, Stanford University.

external agencies are likely to affect the kinds of management practices used in public schools.

A similar line of argument suggests that the environment is also likely to affect private school management. Private schools are not islands unto themselves; they are linked to governing boards and (in the case of religiously affiliated schools) some external bureaucracy whose responsibilities may include such activities as the preparation of curriculum guidelines and hiring of teachers. Contrary to popular opinion, the State is also a likely environmental influence on private schools in that many a private school participates in Federal and State categorical programs.

However, despite these shared environmental characteristics, public and private school environments differ in some important ways. It is often argued that the private school is more similar to a business than its public counterpart. While private schools come under less surveillance from the State, their environment is different in that they exist in a marketplace where clients freely chose the kind of schooling they want. This fact leads many to argue that private schools exist in a market which offers parents an array of educational choices. In order to hold their own in the market it behooves private school managers to run their school in as responsive a manner as possible. Therefore, pressure from potential and actual constituencies is thought to affect management practices in private schools to a much greater degree than in public schools.

This viewpoint is very popular among social scientists as well as educators and consumers. For example, proponents of the voucher initiative in California suggested that the competition engendered by their program would considerably increase management efficiency within the public schools.

There are a number of reasons to question this argument, some of which are discussed in depth in the following chapter, which looks more fully at the effect of competition on private school characteristics.[2] But both lines of reasoning suggest that the environment is likely to affect the management of both public and private schools. If this is so, the influence of the environment may also explain some of the observed differences between public and private schools reported earlier.

Concepts and Variables

Bureaucratic Context

Sociologists often describe the school environment as a set of links to other organizations. When strong ties exist between a school and the State, governing board, or district office, the bureaucratic context seems more complex. By looking at the complexity of these environmental links and constraints, so this theory goes, we can determine the extent to which the environment affects school management practices.

The complexity of the school's bureaucratic context was examined in several ways. In order to measure State and Federal ties, principals were asked to report how many Federal and State categorical programs operated in their schools and which of eight typical State management rules governed the operation of their schools.

Three measures were used to evaluate district/governing board ties to the schools. Principals were asked which of eight typical district/governing board management rules affected them, about the frequency with which they attended district/governing board meetings, and about the frequency with which they were evaluated by their district or governing board. (See table 4.)

Obviously, this analysis of the effect of the environment depends on the amount of variation among both private and public schools on the variables of interest. We expect there to be a good deal of variation among public schools but checked to see if this pattern held for the private schools as well. Our analysis indicates that private schools in our sample report fewer constraining influences from both the State and

Table 4. Variables Used To Measure the Bureaucratic Context and School Management Practices

- **Bureaucratic Context**
  - **Federal/State**
    - State management rules
    - Federal and State Categorical Programs
  - **District/Governing Board**
    - Management rules
    - Meetings
    - Principal evaluation
- **School Management**
  - **School Rules**
    - Teacher rules
    - School management rules
  - **Participation Breadth**
    - Faculty decision participation
    - Participation in teacher evaluations
  - **Staffing Patterns**
    - Aides and volunteers
    - Specialists
    - Assistant administrators
  - **School Meeting Frequency**
    - Administrative meetings
  - **Teacher Evaluation Procedures**
    - Frequency of evaluation
    - Frequency of observation

from their governing boards than do their public school counterparts. Yet considerable variation among private schools exists in the strength of their relationships to organizations in their environments. Some private school administrators report State and governing board ties as extensive as the strongest reported by public school principals. Therefore, we feel the distribution of schools with strong versus weak ties to their overarching organizations is adequate for making meaningful comparisons of the effect of the environment on private school management practices.

Management Practices

The term "management practices" refers to a variety of established processes through which the principal pursues organizational goals. Five different aspects of school management were examined. Principals were asked to report on (1) rules covering a broad range of activities, (2) participation of staff in decisionmaking in a wide variety of areas, (3) numbers and types of personnel such as volunteers, specialists, and assistant administrators, (4) how frequently a variety of regular meetings occurred, and (5) how frequently teachers are observed and evaluated.[3]

One caveat is due at this point. Sociologists frequently describe two distinct types of management practices: those that are formal and structural, and those that involve direct, face-to-face coordination of activity. But distinguishing between these two is often difficult in practice. Furthermore, the differences often are blurred in theoretical writings. The argument, or more often the unspoken assumption, is made that structural arrangements, whether they be formal rules or additional supervisory staff, actually represent direct coordination of activity.[4]

Unfortunately, however, the measures of management practice available to us are all formal, structural aspects of the process. None of our variables addresses the more subtle aspects of coordination, such as whether specialists supervise or even interact with teachers, or whether rules are communicated to teachers. It is also unlikely that we tapped the mechanisms of daily, face-to-face contact used by school administrators to manage their schools.[5] Furthermore, in order to study these issues adequately, information from teachers as well as principals is needed.[6] Despite these limitations, we feel that we can still investigate, albeit in a preliminary fashion, how public and private school management practices are affected by the school's environment.

Theory Versus Survey Findings

Methods

In order to explore the relationship between the environment and public and private school management practices, we used multiple regression analysis, which also enabled us to include school size, metropolitan status, and regional location as control variables. The analysis was done in two steps. First, we looked at the effects of the control variables on school management practices and then, controlling for school size and location, examined the relationships between bureaucratic context

and school management practices. The pattern of results suggests that the environment does not affect school management practices as much as we had supposed.

There is one possible problem with this approach: with such a large sample and with such a long list of variables, one would expect, statistically, a few isolated effects to appear by chance alone. Therefore, we need to look for consistency as well as for strength in relationships among sets of indicators. Furthermore, we have chosen a fairly stringent level of significance to ensure that the relationships reported represent substantively important, as well as statistically significant, differences.

Results

The Effect of Size and Location

We found school size to be a reliable and consistent predictor of three of our five sets of management variables. Larger private high schools are more likely to have a complex division of labor; that is, more specialist professionals, assistant administrators, and aides and volunteers. Decisionmaking is more broad based in larger private high schools, mostly because there are more staff members in a variety of roles available to participate. Similarly, there is a broader array of staff who might schedule administrative meetings. School size was not found to affect either rule formalization or teacher evaluation procedures.

Regional differences were much less pronounced in the private schools than they were in the public sample.[7] School management rules are somewhat more common in Western and suburban private high schools, while administrative meetings are slightly more frequent in the East. The strong regional differences in decisionmaking participation and staffing that were noted among public schools (both were most widespread in the Western States, fairly common in the East, and almost nonexistent in the Midwest) are minor in the private schools. Table 5 summarizes these results.

Table 5. Effect of Size and Location on Private School Management

Large Schools	More specialists More assistant administrators More aides and volunteers More broad based decisionmaking More administrative meetings
Western Schools Suburban Schools	More rules
Eastern Schools	More administrative meetings

Public Schools

There is a general pattern of mild positive associations, as table 6 indicates, between contextual and management variables in public schools. The most consistent effects are on decisionmaking participation and the breadth of faculty and staff participation in teacher evaluations. As the number of special State and Federal programs and State rules concerning school management proliferate, high levels of faculty participation in school decisionmaking are found. Extensive district rules and meetings also are associated with high levels of participation on both indicators.

As far as school rules are concerned, the number of State management rules for schools have no noticeable links to reports of rules governing teacher classroom behavior. On the other hand, extensive State rules appear to increase the number of school management rules. On the district level, however, there is a strong negative relationship between district and public school rules. It appears that the existence of district rules precludes the necessity of school rules or vice versa.

The only relationship that was found between the complexity of the environment and staffing patterns was the positive effect of the number of Federal and State categorical programs on the number of specialists. Neither State nor district ties has any effect on the numbers of aides and volunteers or assistant administrators. It appears that categorical programs have their most direct effect on the hiring of specialists, and that staffing patterns are otherwise unaffected by the bureaucratic context.

Two features of the district have important effects on public school management. Both the number of regular district meetings and the frequency of principal evaluation by the district seem to result in numerous regular school meetings and more frequent formal evaluation of teachers. However, neither Federal or State categorical programs nor State or district rules affects the frequency of school meetings or teacher evaluation practices. Finally, the frequency of teacher observation as distinguished from teacher evaluation is unaffected by both the State and district bureaucratic contexts.

Private Schools

If the pattern of associations in the public school sample was somewhat scattered, the results from the private schools can only be called scarce. There are 4, rather than 12, significant positive associations found in the private sample,* plus a strong negative relationship between school and governing board rules similar to that found among the public schools. (See table 7.)

In private schools, school management rules are less common where there are extensive governing board management rules, but this is the *only* environmental

*These relationships are virtually identical in strength for both Catholic and non-Catholic private schools. Schools from both samples are included in table 7. We entertained the idea that the ties of some schools to diocese structure might represent a basic difference analogous to that of public and private schools. But it became clear that two characteristics of our sample make it impossible to test this notion. First, there are a number of selective, relatively independent college preparatory schools included in the Catholic school group. Second, our non-Catholic sample includes a number of schools that are affiliated closely to specific religious groups and their local organizations, other than the diocese.

Table 6. The Effect of Bureaucratic Context on Public School Management*

	FEDERAL/ STATE	STATE	DISTRICT		
	Categorical Programs	Management Rules	Management Rules	Meetings	Prin. Eval.
School Rule					
Teacher Rules	---	---	---	---	---
School Management Rules	---	+	–	---	---
Participation Breadth					
Faculty Decision Participation	+	+	+	+	---
Participation in Teacher Evaluations	---	---	+	+	---
Staffing Patterns					
Aides and Volunteers	---	---	---	---	---
Specialists	+	---	---	---	---
Assistant Administrators	---	---	---	---	---
School Meeting Frequency					
Administrative Meetings	---	---	---	+	+
Teacher Evaluation Procedures					
Frequency of Evaluation	---	---	---	+	+
Frequency of Observation	---	---	---	---	---

*Multiple regressions controlling for school size and regional and metropolitan location. Significant relations at $p. < .001$

Table 7. The Effect of Bureaucratic Context on Private School Management *

	FEDERAL/ STATE	STATE	GOVERNING BOARD		
	Categorical Programs	Management Rules	Management Rules	Meetings	Princ. Eval.
School Rules					
Teacher Rules	---	---	---	---	---
School Management Rules	---	---	–	---	---
Participation Breadth					
Faculty Decision Participation	+	---	---	---	---
Participation in Teacher Evaluations	---	---	---	---	+
Staffing Patterns					
Aides & Volunteers	---	---	---	---	---
Specialists	---	---	---	---	---
Assistant Administrators	---	---	---	---	---
School Meeting Frequency					
Administrative Meetings	---	---	---	---	---
Teacher Evaluation Procedures					
Frequency of Evaluation	---	---	---	---	+
Frequency of Observation	---	---	---	+	---

*Multiple regressions controlling for school size and metropolitan and regional location. Significant relations at $p < .001$

effect on school rules. Again, none of the measures of bureaucratic context is associated with more extensive rules about teacher behavior in the classroom. Even when the Federal or State Government becomes a source of funding through special programs, few effects on management emerge, perhaps because the level of support is generally low. Faculty participation in decisionmaking is higher, but no other aspects of management reflect the State or Federal presence. Also, nothing appears to be affected by the extensiveness of State rules about school management. Nor would one expect to encounter such an effect when these rules generally do not apply to private schools.

There are no effects of governing board ties on the overall level of faculty participation. Where the school principal is more frequently evaluated, more faculty and staff participate in teacher evaluations, although neither governing board meetings nor rules affects this variable. A more complex environment does not seem to lead to either a broader range of staffing patterns or a larger variety of regular school administrative meetings. However, there are two effects on indicators of teacher evaluation. First, more frequent principal evaluation seems to be reflected in more frequent teacher evaluation. Second, teacher observation is more frequent where the school principal has more regular meetings with members of the governing board.

In sum, there are somewhat inconsistent patterns of positive associations between the complexity of the bureaucratic context in which the private school is located and the extensiveness of school management practices. The relationship between environmental context and the structure of management practices is more apparent in public schools, where three times the number of significant positive associations were observed. The single negative relationship, observed in both samples, is between school and district or governing board rules; principals apparently see the demand for a rule being satisfied from one or the other source, but not from both.

Conclusions

Contrary to our expectations we have found that the environment does *not* have a very strong effect on either public or private high school management practices. General pressures from, or ties to, the Federal or State Government or to the district office or governing board do not seem to produce consistent bureaucratization of management practices. To some extent school organizations, especially those of private schools, seem to function independently, at least insofar as they are able to avoid immediate response to complexity in their bureaucratic environment. There are only small differences between public and private schools in the nature of their management practices, or in the responsiveness of these practices to a complex environment.

Where differences exist, they suggest that the State and district "bureaucracy" are only slightly more important to public than to private schools. But this is not surprising, given that these overarching organizations are less crucial sources of support for private schools. Even when the Federal or State Government becomes a source of financial support for the private school through categorical programs, management practices remain unaffected. This is especially true in private schools,

where the few responses to environmental complexity are most often prompted by contacts with governing board members (through regular meetings with, or frequent evaluation of, the school head). It seems as though the accepted management strategy in private high schools is to concentrate on maintaining an atmosphere of trust both with clients and governing board members, rather than promoting a bureaucratic management style.

These results raise two important issues. First, differences in management practices between public and private schools are not easily explained by differences in their respective environments. Advocates of school decentralization, voucher plans, and the like need to realize that despite the plans of local, State, or Federal policymakers schools can and do remain stubbornly impervious to many environmental mandates.

The second issue is somewhat related. If environmental factors do not control what goes on in schools, what does—especially in the absence of strong internal bureaucratic controls? One possibility is that the basis for authority in schools is not legal-rational, but traditional. The longstanding set of roles and expectations which comprise the cultural definition of a school, rather than rules and regulations, appear to shape organizational behavior.

But if legal-rational authority in the form of rules and mandated practices does not play an important part in controlling behavior, why do these structural artifacts appear in schools? Perhaps legal-rational management practices serve purposes different from their apparent functions. For example, one purpose of structure might be to justify a school in the eyes of the community and those bodies which oversee its operations. Convening meetings and making resolutions can be important rituals that provide local, State, and Federal officials with reassurance that the school is operating properly.[8]

These points suggest that maintaining the legitimacy of the school might be more important than environmental pressures for bureaucratic management. For example, although specialists, rules, and paperwork might be taken on in response to environmental mandates, a school must, first and foremost, look like a school—with teachers in classrooms, textbooks, exams, homework, etc.—to retain the support of parents. So for both the public and private high school principal, the best path might be to fulfill their traditional roles. In short, following this course means that the good faith and commitment of parents and staff members remain unassailed.

Private schools might be able to follow this course with greater ease than public schools, since they are essentially traditional organizations with a much more limited bureaucratic facade than their public school counterparts, and therefore they maintain more of the traditional bases for authority in school management. If commitment to the school by parents and students, for example, is valuable, policymakers and planners who create environmental pressures for public schools may want to rethink the effect rules and regulations have on the capacity of public schools to achieve their goals.

NOTES

1. This tradition of literature, which derives from Weber, is typically called contingency theory. Examples of these works include: Thompson, 1967; Aiken and Hage, 1968; Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967; Woodward, 1965.
2. One reservation is worth mentioning here. One of the characteristics of competition in a market is that buyers are able to differentiate products in terms of their quality. This, however, is difficult to do when schooling is the product. The technology of schools is uncertain, and there is considerable disagreement on how to assess student achievement objectively in both academic and nonacademic areas. Consequently, adapting the metaphor of market competition to schools is difficult.
3. The specifics of these variables are described in chapter 4.
4. Van de Ven, et al. 1976; Corwin 1974; and Katz 1964, are examples of this kind of treatment of management practices.
5. See, for example, Margaret R. Davis and E. Ann Stackhouse, "The Importance of Formal Appearances: The Implementation of Programs for the Evaluation of Elementary Schools and Teachers," in Davis et al., (The Structure of Educational Systems: Explorations in the Theory of Loosely-Coupled Organizations) (Stanford: Stanford University Center for Educational Research, 1977).
6. This information has been collected in followup studies supported by the National Institute of Education. See the Postscript for a complete description of this research.
7. See Abramowitz and Tenenbaum (1978) for details of these findings.
8. John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan, "Institutional Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony," *American Journal of Sociology*, September 1977.

8. *Competition, Choice, and Private Schools: An Exploratory Policy Analysis**

Proposed financial reforms, such as vouchers, proposition 13, and tuition tax credits have dominated recent educational policy concern. Inherent in the discussions has been a fundamental concern about the role of choice in education. Choice is, of course, basic to private education, but the effect on both public and private schools of policies that increase client choice is not entirely clear. Research is now trying to help predict the consequences of such policies, and this chapter is a preliminary effort.

Changes in the financial structure of education, whether through vouchers or tax reforms, probably will result in increased financial support for private schools, thereby creating or maintaining a larger number of schools than would otherwise exist. More schools implies greater choice for parents as well as increased competition among schools for clients. Standard economic arguments contend that this is good: competitive market forces result in suppliers producing what consumers want at the lowest possible price. But in the first section of this chapter, we explore the applicability of this argument for schools and find it wanting. On the basis of the data collected by NIE we speculate on how increased competition and choice might affect private education.

In the second section of this chapter we are also concerned with the effects of competition, but we ask a different question. We want to know if increased competition and greater choice will affect the extent to which parents become involved in schools. At first consideration, it seems that an increase in available choices might reduce the need for parental participation in schools since it is more likely that parents will get the education program they want simply by choosing it. On the other hand, the parents' interest and desire to get involved in their child's education might not be changed by the extent of choice available to them. They might still want involvement, if only to monitor the educational process affecting their child.

*This chapter was written by Jane Hannaway, Teachers College, Columbia University, and William T. Garner, University of San Francisco.

Should parents want involvement, and if their choices are influenced by its availability, increased competition among schools could induce schools to offer more channels for involvement. It is not obvious how the role of parents in private schools will be affected by greater choice and competition; but it is a question that should be of interest to both parents and school managers. A reduction in parental participation could result in a significant character change in these schools. We address this issue by asking whether schools operating now under different levels of competition provide different opportunities for parental participation in school matters. From these results we again speculate about the policy implications.

Our intention in this chapter is to begin to clarify thinking about the relationship between competition and private schools. We are fortunate that NIE collected data that allow us also to obtain some empirical verification of our ideas. However, since the survey was not designed to answer the specific questions we pose, we are forced to rely, at times, on indirect indicators. Despite that drawback, the findings when taken together should be informative for policymakers. They suggest that increased competition will result in a more efficient market for schools and will also lead to more opportunities for parental involvement.

Competitive Market Model

Because parents exercise choice in selecting a private school for their child, and because private schools do not have the relatively assured revenue of public schools, some observers assume that private schools operate the way firms do in a competitive market. In short, it is assumed that the demand and supply interaction matches parental desires and school offerings more closely and efficiently than it does in the Government owned and operated public schools.

The case for expanding school choices may not rest on the degree to which private schooling fits the competitive market model of economics; yet these are the arguments most commonly put forth. And while there has been a great deal of discussion and speculation about the limits and consequences of an educational free market, there has not been much data brought to bear on the reasonableness of the assumptions of the market model as applied to education, much less to its predictions (Coons and Sugarman, 1978; Levin, 1968).

Market behavior analysis traditionally proceeds from a rather strict set of assumptions about ideal markets with "pure competition." The pure competition model of schooling supposes that there are a large number of schools and that parents are free to choose any they like. The model assumes that parents have a good understanding of what they want and what each school provides, leading us to expect a close match between parental preferences and school offerings. The model also assumes that parents do not pay a higher tuition (price) than necessary to purchase a particular type and quality of service, leading us also to expect schools with similar offerings to have similar costs. Schools that do not keep their clients satisfied would lose clientele to other schools. Likewise, schools that overcharge would lose enrollment to lower priced schools of similar quality.

In the following section we analyze more closely the applicability of the free market model to education. Our intent is not to test the model but to use it to

discuss the role of competition in educational markets. We suggest four ways in which the private school market differs from the simplifying assumptions of the model of pure competition and discuss the implications of each. We then turn to the NIE data in an attempt to validate, albeit indirectly, some of our ideas.

The Economic Model

According to the economic model of pure competition, the exercise of choice by consumers regulates the system.[1] The consumer is sovereign; consumer demand determines what is produced and, with production technology, determines the relative prices at which products may be sold. Demand for a commodity is a measure of the amount that consumers are willing and able to buy. Consumers seek what they desire at the lowest price available, and producers compete by offering the "best value." The result is efficient production. Firms that cannot produce efficiently or do not produce what consumers want fail the competitive test and die.

A pure economic model, however, is not completely satisfactory when we attempt to apply it to private educational institutions. Four factors in particular give arthritis to the "invisible" hand: (1) the not-for-profit orientation, (2) the nature of the "commodity" produced, (3) the fact of imperfect competition, and (4) imperfect information. These factors are not completely independent, but theoretical distinctions can be made. (See table 8.)

Not-for-Profit Orientation

The economic model assumes that the behavior of firms is primarily motivated by the desire for increased profits. That assumption does not generally hold for private schools. For example, when demand exceeds supply, the traditional profit-making firm will ration its product (and increase its profits) by raising the selling price.[2] But the not-for-profit school, depending on its preferences, may ration places by raising admission standards or by using some other sorting scheme. A waiting list forms, but prices are not necessarily raised. As a result a segment of the market able and willing to pay for private education, but whom the schools prefer not to serve, is excluded.

The Nature of the Commodity Produced

The "output" of educational institutions is different from other types of commodities distributed in the competitive marketplace. The market model assumes the production of homogeneous goods.[3] This assumption is problematic in education where there is little agreement about what the primary product of schooling, is, much less about whether any particular product is homogeneous. Some argue that education is primarily a screening mechanism by which different types of people are sorted and labeled (Spring, 1976). Various others argue that education produces changes in individuals, with some stressing normative changes and others cognitive. One way to view the commodity marketed by educational organizations is as a set of services purchased in an all-or-nothing package by the consuming household, not

as a single good or service. But an additional critical complication is that some services are sufficiently unclear to permit two observers to reach different conclusions about what the school is offering. Also, after the services have been performed, the identification of the "value-added" by whatever was done is still a problem. Such ambiguity about the product makes it unlikely that consumers have much control over what is produced.

Imperfect Competition

Imperfect competition arises when a consumer or producer has some degree of control over price. (The perfect competition model assumes that no individual or small group can influence quantities or price.) There are basically two ways for a firm to affect its profit: (1) through efficiency of production, and (2) by raising the price of its product. The second way is effective only if there are no competitors offering the same product for a lower price. Therefore, a common strategy is for firms to distinguish themselves and gain some control over the market by offering a slightly different product.

Private schools can achieve control in a similar fashion. They might not be as interested in control over price, but it is safe to assume that school managers prefer to have as much control over the school's operation as possible both for ease of management and for preference differences. Since school managers usually have more (or at least different) information than do people on the outside, they often want the discretion to make decisions as simply and quickly as possible. In addition, we can imagine situations in which the interests of the manager are different from those of the clients, e.g., amount of budget allocated to administration. In such situations, a school manager obviously wants control.

The way to achieve such control is to find a market niche—by offering something different from other schools (or leading buyers to think it is doing so).[4] Presumably, when there is not a rival school, i.e., when parents have no alternative, a school's control over operations and its ability to resist parental influence would be greatest. And since the output of schools is ambiguous, it is probably easier for a school to create an image of being special (whether intentionally or not) than for a firm with a well-defined product. If schools are operating without competition it is likely that there would be considerable variation among schools in the level and pattern of expenditures, even among schools of similar quality.

Imperfect Information

The pure market model assumes that actors' choices are to be based on complete and accurate information that is available at no cost to them. Thus, in the case of schooling, the pure economic model assumes that parents have complete and accurate information about the availability and the quality of a school (what it will produce relative to other schools), and that parents will choose the school yielding the desired results at the lowest price. Certainly, different parents have different preferences. For instance, some might choose a school on the basis of its academic quality, while others base their decision on a school's athletic achievement, location,

religious training, discipline structure, or innovativeness. In general, however, the model leads us to expect that within any one school parental tastes are similar and that the services the school offers reflect those tastes.

Imperfect information refers to situations in which consumers do not possess complete information about what their dollar can actually buy. This condition impairs the market and has serious implications for efficiency. Even if information about schools were considered accurate and reliable, the cost of obtaining it and the knowledge required to do so must be taken into account. Therefore, systematic differences in the quality of information available or in the amount or type of information received by particular groups require appropriate modifications of the pure model predictions. We might expect, for example, that schools serving knowledgeable consumers would be run differently from schools serving poorly informed clients.

Imperfect information occurs on three levels. On the first level, information is costly and/or slow, but possible, for the consumer to obtain. On the second level is the natural asymmetry in information between the producer and the consumer; e.g., the doctor knows more than the patient. The consumer does not necessarily know the value of what he or she has purchased until after the purchase has been made.[5] But it is the third level that describes best the imperfect information condition in education: neither the producer nor the consumer has much understanding about what is produced. Professional educators (producers) know more than parents (consumers) about what goes on in school, but the former are usually unable to predict either the effect of their efforts or the best way to proceed with production. Even after the professionals have finished their work, they are unable to isolate what difference their efforts might have made. Therefore, both consumers and the producers possess only very limited relevant information about the process of education.[6] If consumers do not fully understand what they are buying and producers do not fully understand what they are producing, the exercise of choice by consumers and competition by producers still might not lead to an efficient market.

Model Predictions and Survey Results

In this section we turn to the survey results for indications of how well the market for private schools is working. Given the available data our empirical assessments are necessarily indirect; but we are able to evaluate the functioning of the private school market indirectly by hypothesizing what findings would be expected if the assumptions behind the market model were valid for education markets and comparing actual survey findings to those expected. We have done this in three areas for which survey data are available: expenditure variations; parent and school goal congruence; and parent goal and school outcome congruence. In each three, the results differ from those predicted by the assumptions of the competitive market model.

Taken singly, no one of the tests can be considered conclusive. Together, however, the findings not only support the view that the private school market, in general, does not fit the perfect competition model, but they also suggest that the

Table 8. The Pure Competition Model and the Private School Reality

Model	Reality
1. Profit orientation	Not for profit
2. Homogeneous goods, purchased separately	Bundles of different goods, some of uncertain nature
3. Many producers	Often few producers
4. Information freely available	Information costly, inaccessible, or of uncertain value

market is working less well for lower class clients than for upper class clients. If this is in fact the case, any changes in public policy may need to take this bias into account.

Expenditure Dispersion

If information were perfect in the market for schooling and schools were operating under competitive conditions, we would expect to see similar prices for similar schools. Presumably, knowledgeable parents would not pay more than the lowest available price for a given quality of schooling, and schools charging more would be replaced by competitors. As Stigler (1961) has said, "price dispersion is a manifestation—and, indeed, it is the measure—of ignorance in the market." Likewise, expenditure levels of schools of similar quality would be similar since knowledgeable managers would not expend more than is necessary to produce a given quality and maintain clientele.

We measured dispersion using the reports of expenditure per pupil in the survey.[7] The major factors one would normally expect to affect expenditure differences were analyzed, including: size of the school (to account for possible scale effects); whether the school was boarding (to account for differences due to the cost of residential services); geographic location (to account for regional cost variations); school affiliation (to account for any differences in cost structures between church-affiliated and independent schools); the percentage of graduates going to 4-year colleges (since college preparatory curriculums might have different costs than

others); and the percentage of school parents in white collar or professional occupations (to account for differences in the willingness and ability of parents to pay). Of course, the degree of similarity of schools is not always possible to define, much less to measure. But, with the exception of the ambiguous factors, the analysis should capture most of the variation in expenditure across schools if the competitive market model is working well.

When the analysis was completed, about one half the variation in per pupil expenditure was accounted for. That leaves 50 percent of the expenses *not* accounted for by these factors.[8] Imperfect information is one possible explanation for the unaccounted expenditure variation. Another explanation is that the market for private schools is not sufficiently competitive, allowing schools to operate inefficiently. A third explanation is that variations are due to those unidentified and ambiguous factors we mentioned above. A closer analysis than is possible here of the daily life in private schools and of the impressions of parents of what is going on and what they think they are buying would be necessary to validate such an explanation.

We can imagine school cultures varying greatly among schools and parents being willing to pay different prices for these cultures. That factor would not be captured by the above analysis. We can also imagine that, given the ambiguous nature of the educational process, myths and reputations could develop easily that have little basis in reality. Again, a much closer analysis is necessary to distinguish between culture and myth. At this point, however, we can argue that identifiable factors that normally would be associated with expenditure variation in a perfect market do not account for much of the difference which suggests inefficiencies in the market.

Parent and School Head Goal Congruence

If information about private schools is freely available to clients and potential clients and parents can choose from a number of competing schools, one would expect parents to choose schools with educational philosophies similar to their own. In the survey, private school heads rated the importance of each of seven educational goals (item 70). Elsewhere they rated the same seven goals as they believed the majority of the school's parents would (item 30). To determine the similarity of the results, we constructed an index of parent and school head goal congruence[9] and found considerable disparity between the parent and school head ratings.[10] Further analysis suggested that the disparity seemed significantly related to the proportion of parents in the school with white collar or professional occupations: the higher the proportion of such parents, the closer the congruence between parent and school head goal ratings.

These findings are another indication that information is neither perfectly nor uniformly distributed in the private school market. Upper class parents are more likely to choose a school whose school head agrees with their goals than are lower class parents, i.e., they make better informed choices.[11] Another interpretation of the findings is that schools behave as monopolies: facing little competition, they prefer to maintain their own preferences rather than those of lower class parents. They can do this without risk if clients have no alternative schools available.

Parent Goal and School Output

In a third test we examined the congruence between parent educational goal ratings (again, as reported by the school head) and output indicators of the school. The notion of imperfect information in schooling suggests that parents will not always get what they want when selecting a school as a result of one or a combination of the conditions discussed earlier. Therefore, variation will exist in the degree to which parent educational goals are matched by actual school offerings and outcomes. Monopoly, in which the supplier (the school) rather than the consumer has control over what services are offered, could lead to the same results. In other words, although school clients might know that what they are buying is not really what they want, they have limited choice.

To investigate these relationships, we constructed indexes of course offerings related to two educational goals: preparation for work and college preparation. Available in the survey data are the proportion of each school's graduates entering the labor force or 4-year colleges. If information about the schools is freely available and schools are responsive to parental preferences, parent educational goal rating should be strongly related to actual course offerings and to student outcomes (college or labor force percentages).

The results of these analyses show a relationship between parent educational goal rating and the measures of course offerings and student outcomes. But there is an even stronger relation between parent occupation (proportion white collar or professional) and the offerings and outcomes. That is, of two schools with identical parent goal ratings, the correspondence of school output to those ratings will be substantially higher in the school with a higher proportion of white collar and professional parents. These results, while based on principals' perceptions of parent attitudes, support a view that the private school market is biased; it works better for upper class than for lower class clients.

Policy Implications

The research findings support our broader suspicion that the market mechanisms may not be fully effective as a means to regulate private schooling. Imperfect information and imperfect competition both contribute to the situation, but the available data do not allow us to distinguish between the explanations. We would need data from the individual consumer level to measure what parents actually know and what they want. However, we can discuss the policy implications of the two explanations.

Assuming the problem is informational, consumer education programs might help. Schools could be required to make public certain information about its dropouts and graduates.[12] Although many schools already publicize what their graduates do, this is often done selectively. Parents do not know the degree to which a school is responsible for any successes. If schools report, in a standard way, what happens to different types of students (who, for example, scored within certain percentiles on entrance tests), parents would be able to identify those schools that performed better with students of different achievement (ability) levels. Other information,

such as survey results about students' interests might help inform parents about school cultures. However, if the problem is how different parents use the available information, a more targeted consumer education program would be what is needed, rather than more information.

If the problem is competition, existing proposals might be sufficient. These initiatives are likely to encourage competition and improve the market. There would be an increased supply of schools, making it more likely that parents, including lower income parents, could find the type of school they want. Given increased competition, schools should also become more responsive to parental objectives.

Increased competition could also have an indirect effect on information to parents, although we can imagine some negative as well as positive effects on the quality of parental choices. Although increased competition will make it possible for parents to compare the virtues of different schools simply because alternative schools are available, we can imagine that under very competitive situations parents could become befuddled and resort to simple decisions that result in poor choices.

It is also possible that, given the general lack of a clear understanding of the educational process and its effects, the education market will never work well. Information about schools is difficult, at best, to evaluate; and increases in competition could only obscure problems. Myths may, in fact, develop and govern the system as consumers try to rationalize their choices. Under such circumstances, policy alternatives will be difficult to design.

Competition and Client Participation [13]

From the question of the applicability of the traditional competitive market model to schooling we turn to the question of whether the level of competition a school faces affects the way it is managed. More specifically, we are interested in whether competition affects the extent to which parents play a role in running a school and the relationship between competition and parental participation in private schools.

Borrowing from Hirschman (1972), we use the term "voice" to refer to attempts by consumers to influence the school internally, i.e., through participation in policy and decisionmaking. We examine the nature of voice by looking at the extent of formal mechanisms for client participation, such as parent representation on policy and advisory groups. Specifically, we are interested in how the extent of choice, or the amount of competition facing a school, affects voice.

We make two arguments (which lead to opposite predictions) about the relationship between competition and voice. First, we argue that higher levels of competition have a negative effect on the extent of voice *demanded by parents*. Then we make a supply argument: that competition has a positive effect on the extent of voice *supplied by schools*. We develop these two arguments below and then turn to the NIE survey data to indicate which argument better explains the relationship between competition and client participation in private schools.[14] The findings suggest conditions under which schools facing greater competition *supply* parents

with more formal channels of voice. They imply that, in some cases, control by consumer choice and control by consumer voice go hand in hand.

The Demand Argument

According to the demand argument, parents are more likely to *demand* participation in school decisionmaking as the number of alternative schools available to them declines, i.e., when the school has little competition. The idea is that because they have fewer alternatives, parents must work with the school they have to obtain what they want. This simple idea leads to a number of expectations about the extent of parental voice under various conditions, and it is these expectations that form the bases for empirical explorations. Specifically, we focus on factors that limit the number of alternatives available to parents (i.e., limit competition) and estimate their effect on the level of parental input into a school (i.e., voice).[15] These factors, which we discuss later, are specialization, cost per student, school quality, and population density.

The relationship between competition and voice in school organizations becomes a bit more complicated than the demand argument suggests when we question why managers would listen to their consumers when their consumers have few exit options. The demand argument focuses on the conditions under which consumers are likely to demand voice, but it does not analyze the conditions that would motivate managers to *provide* channels for voice, i.e., a supply argument.

The Supply Argument

There are at least three reasons why we might expect school managers to provide channels for parent participation. The first is related to competition and, in the case of schools at least, runs counter to the consumer demand argument. In general, the idea is that the bases of competition are unclear among organizations (such as schools or mental health agencies) with unspecifiable outcomes and with a little-understood technology. In the case of private schools, given the difficulty of a parent's predicting how well a child and a school will interact, the provision for ongoing parent involvement might, in fact, be one of the appealing factors weighed by parents when making a school choice. Such channels for involvement assure parents that if things are not going well, they will have a say in making changes. The extent of provision for parent input could be one of the bases of competition among schools, leading us to expect it to increase with competition.

A second reason private schools may "supply" channels for voice is to stifle any public expression of parent discontent. Because of the ambiguous nature of their output, schools greatly depend on their reputations for obtaining clients. Therefore, while the possibility of exit might not be particularly threatening to private school managers, the future costs associated with loss of reputation, i.e., loss of future clientele, could be.

Another reason that we might expect schools facing greater competition to provide more channels for involvement, even when the probability of exit is low, is

one of comparison. Given the lack of preciseness in the educational process, comparing their school with other schools is one way for parents to obtain information about the appropriateness of what their particular school is doing. The more comparisons that can be made, i.e., the greater the number of similar schools nearby, the more information parents would have about what programs, services, etc., are possible. This increased information about the range of possibilities might motivate schools toward harder selling efforts. (Indeed, it might also increase the likelihood of attempts by parents to influence their own school.) Without such comparisons, parents would not know if they could be better served; as a result, it would not be necessary for schools to provide for a high level of parent involvement.

Schools that are not-for-profit organizations provide other reasons for being particularly open to voice. A school's management has the latitude to be concerned with other objectives, for example, a happy clientele. In a pure competitive world every firm is threatened by the actions of more efficient or innovative competitors to whom clients may exit. Thus, any behavior directed to objectives other than profit maximization could put a firm out of the running. But in the case of schools, school managers could, on the one hand, need the detailed, complex information feedback that client voice provides and, on the other hand, have the freedom to be responsive with no discernable cost to production.

Competition Factors

The basic idea being investigated is whether the extent of choice available to parents (i.e., the extent of competition faced by the school) is related to the extent of formal participation in school matters by parents (i.e., voice). However, since we have no direct measures of competition in the survey, we rely on indirect measures commonly assumed to be related to competition: specialization, quality, expenditure per student, and population density. Greater levels of specialization and higher quality constrain competition, while higher costs and greater population density are associated with more competition.

Specialization involves product differentiation: a school offers a "product" different enough from those of its competitors and is able to secure a niche in the market (where it functions with only limited competition). According to the consumer demand argument, we would expect this to increase the likelihood of voice; parents have few alternatives. From the supply side, if by virtue of its specialization it is protected from competition, a school would not deem it necessary to provide voice channels. A specialization index was constructed to measure the range of programs and course offerings in each school; specialized schools were those with the narrowest range of offerings. A school could specialize, for example, in providing services for high-achieving college-bound students, or for students preparing for vocational careers.

The second factor related to competition is the *quality of the school*, which we measured in terms of the percentage of graduates attending 4-year colleges. Exit options are particularly limited for schools at the upper end of the quality continuum (Hirschman, 1972). The idea is that exit is discouraged for the quality-conscious consumer because there is no place to go but down. Therefore, parents become

involved to ensure the maintenance of high quality "production" (demand argument). But we can also argue that, given their favored position in the market, these schools may be the least responsive (supply argument).

A third factor associated with competition is *expenditure per student*, which we assume varies directly with tuition. The idea is that parents of students in high-cost schools are generally wealthier than parents of students in low cost schools. Wealthier parents do not face the same tuition constraints when choosing a school; they have more options. Consequently, high cost schools would be subject to more market pressure. According to the demand view, we would expect this to have a negative effect on voice; and, according to the supply view, we would expect it to have a positive effect.

One might also expect competition to be greater in more *densely populated* areas since there should be more schools from which to choose. The demand view would lead us to expect a negative relation between population density and voice, while the supply view would predict a positive relationship.

The Findings

The results in table 9 show that there is some evidence for both the demand and the supply arguments,[16] although the pattern of response for Catholic schools is different from the pattern for other nonpublic schools. The findings for the Catholic schools are consistent with the supply argument; competition leads Catholic schools to provide more voice channels. The findings for the other nonpublic schools support the demand argument: under conditions of greater competition (and hence greater choice), parents are less likely to demand input into school matters.

The Catholic school findings could be interpreted two ways. First, we could argue that Catholic schools are fearful of losing further enrollment.[17] The enrollment in Catholic schools has been declining in recent years (although the trend may now be changing). This loss may be due to increased tuition costs, a possible decline in desire for religious study, middle class flight, and/or the general reduction in the school age population. Having experienced such enrollment declines, Catholic schools might be attempting to be increasingly responsive to parents to maintain enrollment. This is consistent with the supply argument. On the other hand, one might argue that there is something about a school's being "Catholic" that reduces the negative effect of competition on voice. Hirschman might argue this as loyalty—that even when there are alternative schools, Catholics would rather fight than switch.

A third possible reason for our finding that the extent of voice increases with competition in Catholic schools is that the dominant factor affecting the choice of Catholic school clients could be the school's religious orientation. These schools offer a special service that other nearby schools do not, which could mean that Catholic schools operate with little competition, even though our indicators suggest otherwise. However, just because parents place a high value on religious education does not necessarily mean that they are satisfied with other aspects of the school's program. Therefore, while parents might not exit, they may very well become involved to change those aspects of the school about which they are not happy.

Table 9. Relationship Between Competition Factors and Extent of Voice*

	Demand Argument	Supply Argument
Total Sample (N = 202)		
Specialization	+	−
% College	+	−
Per pupil expenditure	⊖	+
Population Density	−	⊕
Non-Catholic Schools (N = 37)		
Specialization	⊕	−
% College	⊕	−
Per pupil expenditure	⊖	+
Population Density	−	⊕ **
Catholic Schools (N = 165)		
Specialization	+	⊖
% College	+	⊖
Per pupil expenditure	⊖	+
Population Density	−	⊕ ***

*** .001
** .01

*The regression results on which these tables are based can be found in Garner and Hannaway, 1979a. The signs show the predicted slope for the demand argument and the supply argument. The circled sign denotes the empirical findings.

There are two other findings of interest that should be discussed. One is the consistent and significant positive relation between population density and voice. Since urban areas have more schools from which to choose, we assumed there would be more competition and therefore less voice. Our initial assumptions, however, did not take into account the recent increase in demand for private schools in urban areas. Demand, in fact, may far outrun supply. Consequently, many schools are requiring students to enroll in earlier grades to ensure a place in the upper grades. The exit option in urban areas is therefore severely limited, which suggests that the alternative explanation is also likely—that voice is being demanded because choice is limited.

The other finding is the effect associated with higher expenditures, the implication being that wealthier parents have fewer involvement mechanisms available to

them than do less well-to-do parents. This is not surprising in light of the demand argument. These parents, because of greater wealth, have more options open to them. When they are dissatisfied with a school, they change to a different one. However, on the surface, the finding is counter to the conventional wisdom that schools are more open to the rich than to the poor.

There are a number of additional alternative interpretations for this finding, which make it an interesting area for further research. First, wealthier parents may be more satisfied with the schools they have chosen and therefore do not feel a need for voice. This interpretation is consistent with our finding that schools with larger proportions of white collar and professional parents are more likely to provide the services and outcomes parents want. This could be because they have made better initial choices or because the schools are responsive to their wants without requiring them to organize.[18] Second, higher income and lower income parents may use different channels for influencing school policies. Our study was concerned with formal mechanisms for parental involvement, which could be used more often by lower income parents because there is strength in numbers. Higher income parents, who often have more personal influence, could rely to a greater extent on informal channels. Further research is necessary to distinguish among these interpretations.

Policy Implications

The general policy issue embedded in the last half of this chapter is whether increased competition among schools will affect parental involvement, i.e., voice, in schools. The idea is one of consumer protection, especially given the conditions of imperfect information. (This, of course, is a question separate from whether increased competition will lead to better schooling.) Our results are mixed. On one hand, we found that under conditions of greater competition Catholic schools provided parents with more channels for involvement; but the same did not hold for other nonpublic schools where the extent of formal participation decreased with higher levels of competition. We suggested earlier that Catholic schools actually might not be facing much competition; i.e., they are the only alternative for many Catholics. But the fact that they have experienced enrollment decline makes this reasoning less tenable. The more plausible argument is that Catholic school administrators are actively trying to maintain their enrollments and keep their schools alive by involving parents in running them. In addition, we might also argue that the reason the other nonpublic schools have not been providing parental involvement is that these schools, especially the urban ones, have been operating under conditions of excess demand, making them impervious to competition. If our interpretations here are correct, we can argue that increases in competition will lead all schools to provide for greater parental involvement to maintain their clients. Catholic schools are already experiencing this, and the other private schools would experience similar conditions if increased competition and greater choice were to result from policy initiatives.

While the pure market model has limited usefulness for understanding the effect of choice on schools, competition still appears to be an important factor in how

schools function. Specifically the findings suggest that policies that increase client choice and competition will lead to a distribution of schools that corresponds better to parent preferences and that are more open to parents.

NOTES

1. The assumptions of this model include:
   a. utility-maximizing behavior;
   b. sufficient buyers and sellers so no single buyer, seller, or small group can affect prices;
   c. unrestricted entry and exit from the market for both producers and consumers;
   d. perfect and free information;
   e. homogeneous goods.
2. Generally one would expect that higher-than-normal profits would attract new firms into the market, thus increasing the amount supplied and lowering price to a normal profit level.
3. That is, for any type of good in question the product is essentially the same (is homogeneous) regardless of who produces it.
4. The ability of a school to differentiate its product in this way will be limited by the size of the market in which it is operating.
5. See Arrow (1973) for a discussion of this point.
6. See Hirschman (1974) about the effects of ignorance on the part of producers and consumers in different sectors, among them education.
7. The survey data do not contain actual tuition charges (prices) to parents.
8. Furthermore, the findings show that even if two schools are alike on the factors, there is about one chance in three that their expenditures per pupil will differ by more than $1,700, a large range when compared with a mean expenditure of about $1,400 for the sampled schools.
9. See Garner and Hannaway (1979b) for details of index construction.
10. This can be shown by simple descriptive statistics: the standard deviation of the index was as large as its mean.
11. Findings from the Alum Rock voucher experiment showed that socially advantaged parents had better information about schooling alternatives than less advantaged parents (see Bridge, 1978).
12. Many schools may balk at proposals to provide more information. One argument is that results are unpredictable and a school's track record for any one year might not be a good predictor for a particular student in the next year. Such an argument only underscores the difficulty parents have making a choice. Another argument against the proposal is the costs associated with recordkeeping, although they need not be great.
13. We draw heavily on the thinking of Hirschman (1972) for this part of the chapter.
14. Both arguments are based on consumer response to discontent; consumer exit and consumer voice are mechanisms that can improve an organization's performance. If consumers are well satisfied, we might expect neither exit nor voice. To investigate these ideas properly at least two time periods should be used: one to measure the extent of discontent and one to measure the response. The design of this study, however, is one period cross-sectional, and therefore we are implicitly making certain assumptions. The basic assumption is that the phenomenon being studied is in equilibrium; that is, the conditions that lead to voice have already had their effect, and they are similar for all schools. We are also measuring the result in the form of institutionalized channels. This is probably not an unreasonable assumption given that the fortunes of educational institutions in general have fallen during the 1970's and that public attitudes toward schools during this same period have steadily declined (Gallup, 1978).

15. Parents might want to participate in school matters for a number of reasons. Because of imperfect information and the ambiguity of the schooling process, parents might not be able to make completely satisfactory initial choices and, therefore, must get involved to find out how well a school is doing with their child and how things might be changed. In addition to a lack of alternatives, the exit option is limited for private school clients because the cost to the student (psychological, social, and educational) of changing schools is so high. One might also reason that parents derive pleasure from being involved in their children's life; or that they satisfy a sense of duty through participation in school affairs.
16. We also investigated the effect of factors related to parental ability to organize on voice. These were school size and client homogeneity, but neither of the effects was significant.
17. See Erikson et al., 1978.
18. An alternate explanation is that parents pay such high prices for private education that they have to believe that their schools are adequate.

9. *Reflections for Private High School Administrators**

Spelling out the practical implications of research reports for educational practitioners is a dubious enterprise. Subsequent decisionmaking of school administrators more often than not seems minimally influenced by the results of such reports. The research and development community regularly laments the fact that "the rapid growth of education knowledge has not been accompanied by a parallel surge in educational reform."[1] As this study itself suggests, high school principals may have developed the capacity to deflect intrusion of outside forces and agencies by performing certain rituals that suggest the conformity and cooperation necessary to "legitimate" the school in the eyes of the public.[2]

The perennial problem involves the differing time perspectives and reward systems of the practitioner and the researcher.[3] For the practitioner the value of a survey such as this does not derive from the broad policy implications that may have an impact over a relatively long span of time; rather, the significance of this study for the practitioner must address the immediate or medium-range practical problems within the environment for which the practitioner has current responsibility. The intent of this chapter is to bring the survey results within the time frame and range of interests of administrators of private schools. What follows are a former private school administrator's reflections on the practical implications of the survey's general conclusions.

Private School Programs

Private schools, in general, have a distinctive purpose centered around the selection of a more academically able student body than the public schools enroll.[4] Consequently, private schools sponsor programs that focus more narrowly on academic pursuits. For most private schools, a traditional academic core is supplemented by a religious educational program. Even alternative programs in private schools, many of which were initiated in response to late 1960's demands for greater

*This chapter was written by Robert R. Newton, Boston College.

adaptation to student needs and interests, were translated by private schools into courses that strengthened the academic tone of the school rather than intensifying the "relevancy" of programs. Public schools, on the other hand, focus on a more heterogeneous student population and thus offer programs that meet a wide range of backgrounds and needs.

Two factors are emerging that may have a significant impact on the narrowly defined private school programs as they emerge in the survey; they are factors whose implications will produce contradictory pressures on private school programs. The first is the declining birthrate (especially among the Catholic population), which threatens to disrupt the homogeneity of private school enrollments and thus force changes in these programs. The second is the "back to the basics" movement already visible in the responses of private school administrators in the survey.[5]

The decline in the general pool of students who will be entering high school can be expected to produce a greater competition for those students both between public and private schools and among the private schools themselves. For example, the significant decline in Catholic elementary school enrollments between 1975 and 1979 has created fewer applicants for Catholic high schools.[6] Diminished numbers of applications have caused the selection of students to come from a wider range of ability levels and have decreased the homogeneity of private school populations. To keep up enrollments, a more heterogeneous student body, less concentrated in the upper levels of academic aptitude/achievement, has been admitted. Admissions standards are modified, and cutoff scores are lowered to maintain operations at present levels or, in some cases, merely to survive.[7] The reaction of private schools to the declining pool of applicants will be similar to that of the private colleges that found their applicant pools declining. Student populations will become more diverse, and programs will undergo corresponding changes.

Two additional forces must be added to the phenomenon of declining numbers of applications: the escalation of private school tuitions and, simultaneously, the decrease in discretionary income available to the general population. Vitullo-Martin argues that economic forces and Government tax policies already have begun to deny Americans money left after taxes and necessities that has traditionally been used to make private choices.[8] As the Government increasingly provides services for citizens, ordinary persons will be priced out of some markets, such as for housing and for educational alternatives for their children. The combination of escalating costs and diminishing discretionary income will further reduce the pool of families/students able to consider private schools, thus forcing private schools to become even more comprehensive in their search for students to fill their classrooms.

The parallel implications for private school programs are obvious. A more heterogeneous student body will mean a more diversified program. All students will not possess the same basic skills or be capable of the same college-oriented program. Sequences focusing on alternatives other than higher education will be introduced; remedial programs will become more important than they have been in the past.

As any administrator knows, more diversified programs demand larger student bodies to produce the options necessary to support full alternatives. The small size of many private schools, regarded in the survey as a source of strength by most

private school principals and as a problem by public school principals, may emerge as increasingly problematic for private schools.[9]

The survey reports that a majority of the private school administrators noted that there is a greater emphasis on basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills than there was 5 years ago. In the return to basic skills, the private schools have a shorter journey to make since, as the survey intimates, even through the period of student unrest in the 1960's, private schools maintained their primarily traditional academic focus. Thus, although the "back to the basics" movement will be applied differently in private than in public schools, the goal will be the same.

During the late 1960's and early 1970's, schools shifted a portion of their curriculum from an emphasis on what should be taught to a concern for what students wanted to learn or what the faculty, in an attempt to maintain or recover student attention, wanted to teach. The current movement can be seen as a return to the principle of what should be taught and learned, rather than what seems to be of immediate relevance or interest. This return to what should be taught will focus on content and skills. Content will shift from focus on the relevant to communication of a significant portion of the cultural heritage. The latter will be accomplished mainly through the study of the enduring books and ideas that are the "basics" of our civilization. There also will be a return to traditional skills, e.g., clear and cogent writing and speaking, mathematics and reading competence, and study skills.

Thus, private schools will face contradictory pressures. The homogeneity, which has allowed a specialized and relatively narrow focus, will be challenged by trends that require incorporation of a more varied student population. At the same time, a back to basics movement, already firmly underway in private education, will work toward narrowing the mission of private schools. Some observers suggest that the academic emphasis will continue and actually will be revitalized, but the schools will apply and adapt this emphasis to a more diverse population. Within the traditionally narrow academic focus of private schools, there will be an increased range of programs to meet wider students needs and interests.

Management And Organization In Private Schools

The conclusions of the survey results on school management suggest that private schools do not follow the bureaucratic model: there is little specialization, minimal coordination through rules, and infrequent formal evaluation.[10] Authority is shared with faculty members who are involved in decisionmaking, especially in their areas of professional competence. Although the principal's authority is strong, there are few rules regarding instruction. Principals in private schools have a stronger voice in selecting and dismissing faculty and in budgeting and planning processes than do their public school counterparts. Private schools have not created elaborate structures in response to environmental demands; instead, the structures that do exist emphasize managing the internal environment and avoiding the demands of external forces. Private schools are islands unto themselves.

The picture of private school managers and their management practices that emerges from the survey is not a surprising one. The role of the private school administrator has been interpreted in terms of the concept of traditional authority

rather than in more formal or legal terms. Their authority has been both derived from, and exercised in, a manner not emphasizing legal prerogatives and responsibilities.

A review of the results of the survey combined with current trends in private education suggests a number of implications for the future of private schools. These implications focus around (1) the organizational context of private schools, (2) the internal environment of private schools, and (3) the nature of authority and governance in private education.

The Context Of Private Education: Islands Unto Themselves

An understanding of the management and organization of private schools must begin with the assumption that they are relatively independent operations. Although they may be included in a "system" of schools such as that of a diocese, private schools are for the most part responsible for charting their own destinies. Private schools exist primarily as a result of the initiative and continued support of those who attend the schools and those who operate them. At a critical moment, some higher official may intervene; or the Federal, State, or local government may insist on compliance with a new rule or regulation. For the most part, however, private schools are expected to be responsible for attracting their students; devising their programs; raising their funds; and governing and deciding for themselves who they are, and what and how they will accomplish their goals. The local Catholic school systems, which represent 70 percent of the private schools, are not so much systems or districts in the public school sense, but, as the superintendent of one of the larger Catholic dioceses suggested: "loose federations of basically independent schools." The superintendent of a diocesan school system focuses energies more on coordination, service, and consultantship than on decisionmaking and control. Independent schools, outside any system other than a voluntary association (such as the National Association of Independent Schools or local or State organizations), are even more dramatically uninvolved in and unattached to a controlling superorganization.

At the same time, private schools, especially those that are religiously oriented, are involved in and indirectly guided by the values of the communities they serve. A religiously oriented school is expected to reflect and promote the values and beliefs of the sponsoring religious tradition. The *Evaluative Criteria for the Evaluation of Secondary Schools* directs private schools to consider the parents of their students as the community they serve, rather than the geographical areas that public schools regard as their communities.[11] The religiously oriented school derives its identity from its relationship to a religious tradition; its philosophy and objectives are directed toward service of that same tradition.

Consequently, the principals of private high schools are in an unusual position. They are expected, sometimes with the help of guidelines from a central authority, to produce a local implementation of the values of the tradition in a particular school. In a sense, they are given a task and then told to take responsibility for its further specification and implementation. The central office, if one exists, is willing to help, will occcasionally attempt to direct, but generally prefers to leave the operation of the schools to those active locally. Although in systemic private schools

values emerge from a central source and authority, their adaptation and implementation is delegated to local administration.[12] In many, the school stands as its own central source of authority.

The implications of this independent status are generally positive. Individual schools, given the freedom to work out programs, can adapt their programs to their clienteles and also adjust these same programs to the physical and personnel resources available to them. As the survey reports, individual schools have either control or strong influence over the two major components of their schools' operation: personnel and budget. The majority of the religiously oriented schools have the advantage of involvement in larger organizations that share the same value orientation. As a result, although control may be minimal, many of the services and coordination that can enhance individual schools are available to private schools. The diocesan structure, for example, provides an informal network of relationships that can promote the diffusion of ideas and practices.[13]

At the same time, there presently exist "centralizing" tendencies that may create tension with the "independent" mode of operation of many private schools. Governmental agencies, through increasing regulation of private schools, could significantly reduce the freedom with which such schools currently operate. Competency tests, for example, which determine the outcomes of high school programs, are intended not only to affect but ultimately to determine the content of those programs. At present, the minimal levels demanded by competency tests pose no threat for the vast majority of private schools. However, the insistence of this movement, combined with the power inherent in the ability to determine outcomes, could exert significant control over the operation of private schools. Another obvious example is the attempt by the Internal Revenue Service to pressure religious schools by threatening review of their tax-exempt status unless they are able to prove that they are not discriminating against minority students.[14]

A similar tension should continue to develop within the largest segment of private education, the Catholic schools. In the form of guidelines for religious instruction or prescription of outcomes for religious educational programs, for example, the central office can exert more specific and precise control over programs. Similarly, the emergence of lay teachers' associations has shifted to the center of the system additional power and discretion, not only in terms of centralized determination of compensation and allocation of resources, but also in terms of more uniform personnel policies—an area previously in the hands of local school authorities. The diocesan personnel handbook could relieve the local principal of the obligation to devise such policies and simultaneously impose a set of regulations and procedures only partially related to the local situation.

The Internal Environment

The general lack of control exerted by outside agencies over private schools is mirrored in the freedom given to faculties within the school environment itself. As indicated in the survey, teaching faculty are allowed wide participation in decisions affecting their professional interest.[15] Although teachers are subject to a variety of rules, there are fewer rules in instructional than in noninstructional areas, and fewer still the closer the area is to the daily practice of instruction.

The division of responsibilities is similar to the Interacting Spheres Model proposed by Hanson, in which predominantly instructional decisions are regarded as teacher prerogatives and systemwide decisions are regarded as administrative prerogatives.[16] The teachers' area of decisionmaking parallels their area of competence and focuses on the instructional; the administrative sphere is comprised of the more formal decision areas: *allocation* decisions—utilization of material and human resources; *security* decisions—legally mandated supervision of transportation, food service, discipline, etc.; *boundary* decisions—representation of the school to its publics, e.g., parents, the central office, etc.; and *evaluation* decisions—supervision of faculty and programs. Teachers are allowed to participate or make decisions in areas where they have immediate contact with problems, special competence, and responsibility for implementation. Because of the relative freedom from outside central regulation in the past (e.g., in the choice of textbooks, in the determination of teacher responsibilities, etc.), significant accommodation could be made to the instructional personnel in allowing them decisionmaking authority in their sphere of competence. The movement toward centralization (e.g., in diocesan systems) will create a tendency toward greater uniformity and away from local adaptation.

Collective bargaining, where it has existed, has had the effect of eroding areas of exclusive local administrative discretion and made legitimate bargaining items not only of teacher compensation, but also of teacher/student ratios, out-of-class assignments, free time during the school day, classroom supervision periods, vacation schedules, etc. Simultaneously, the movement toward accountability, which has affected education generally and has influenced private schools as well, aims at increased involvement of administration in classroom activity through the specification of precise outcomes for classroom instruction. By defining and evaluating specific objectives, the administration is able to insert itself into a domain previously thought the exclusive arena of the teacher.

As the survey indicates, teachers in private schools presently have more influence in areas for which they have immediate responsibility. Administrators have been content to allow instruction to proceed relatively without interference. Private school administrators generally have acted without significant outside or inside interference in areas for which they had direct responsibility. Although it might be argued that, given the minimal evaluation of instruction currently being implemented, additional effort might be appropriate, the happy compromise of administration/faculty noninterference indicated in the survey results may be threatened not only by movement toward more uniform, centrally determined personnel procedures, but also by the desire for more precise and consistent school outcomes.

The Nature of Authority In Private Schools

The survey findings indicate the minimal presence of bureaucratic elements in private schools. Bureaucracy in Weber's ideal type was based on legal authority wherein obedience was owed to the legally established impersonal order.[17] The rational/legal approach prescribed the careful development of rules, specialized competence, hierarchical control, careful descriptions of the function of each office, etc. The movement toward the creation of a more impersonal, rational order has,

in part, been resisted by private schools because they have continued to operate on the basis of traditional authority, i.e., the convictions that there is something sacred about the education of the young and that teaching is a vocation. As rights and responsibilities have been defined more carefully and precisely through the use of collective-bargaining agreements in public education, there has been a shift from the idea of teaching as a vocation and education as a sacred rather than a secular endeavor. Private schools, because they have been less exposed to the more legalistic forces that have been imposed on the public schools (e.g., collective bargaining, court rulings on disciplinary procedures, State tenure laws) have been able to preserve a more traditional view of education. In the religious schools, which are the vast majority of the private schools in the United States, teaching has been regarded as a special ministry that called not only for teaching competence but also for special dedication.

Erickson's research in British Columbia seems consistent with this interpretation. He found that the private schools in his studies were best described by the "Gemeinschaft" model, "... the condition that exists when the people associated with a school are strongly held together by commitment to each other, to the enterprise as a whole, to the 'special' goals of the enterprise, and to their various tasks in the enterprise."[18] Erickson defined commitment as the tendency to approach one's work with intense feeling. The study found that the private schools surveyed were marked by a much higher level of mutual commitment of parents, students, and teachers. The school was not thought of merely as a formal institution serving a function in society, but as a community based on common beliefs and mutual commitment.

Contributing to this Gemeinschaft was transference, or the tendency to transfer to the principal and teachers of a religiously oriented school the same feeling that one has about religion and the Church.[19] The school was seen as an extension of the Church, and the principal was believed to possess authority similar to that of the pastor of the Church. Erickson notes that one of the amazing findings of his study was that, despite salaries $10,000 less, on the average, than those of the public school teachers surveyed, the level of commitment among private school teachers was significantly greater.

It might be suggested that what the private schools have maintained is a basis of authority for their operation—traditional rather than legal/rational—which appeals to intrinsic satisfaction rather than extrinsic rewards.[20] At the same time, the forces that have shifted the public schools from a traditional to a legal/rational basis are beginning to impinge on the private schools, in the form of collective bargaining, more precise and uniform definition of rights and responsibilities, specification of evaluative procedures, and redefinition of the limits on administrative authority and discretion.

At present private education has maintained the more traditional basis for its authority. How long this will be maintained in the face of societal trends toward legal/rational direction is uncertain. What does seem clear is that once the basis for authority has shifted to the legal/rational, it is unlikely that it will return to the traditional.

Competition for Clients

As noted above, the increasing competition for a declining pool of applicants potentially will present the problem of a greater supply of private educational opportunities than there is demand. By necessity, private schools must promote greater information about themselves as distinctive options if they wish to maintain their student bodies, both in terms of size and academic level.

In addition to more complete and systematic diffusion of factual information, private schools will need to become more sophisticated about how the choice for private education or for various private schools is actually made. Two factors seem especially important: (1) the identification of private school students and their parents with the group sponsoring the school; and (2) the impact on choice of the informal, highly personal, social networks through which objective information is filtered and interpreted.

The primary reason that those involved in a religious tradition choose a religiously oriented school is their incorporation in that religious community. The vast majority of students in Catholic schools are Catholic; the vast majority of students in Jewish schools are Jewish. Similarly, the vast majority of students in protestant fundamentalist schools are from the protestant fundamentalist sects. Parents and students have chosen these religiously oriented schools because of their desire and commitment to raise their children within a particular religious tradition. Thus, there is a fundamental predisposition to be open to whatever consumer information is available about those schools. The case could be made that the private schools serve a particular socioeconomic and intellectual elite that traditionally attend independent schools; it is incorporation into this elite community that creates the basic disposition to choose private education.

The second consideration seems as important as the first. Numerous studies have advanced the theory that what is most decisive in individual choice is most often not objective information about the various choices but the personal opinions of significant others about those choices.[21] Commenting on this phenomenon, House remarks: "... one does not buy a radio when he hears about it; he buys it when he hears that his neighbors and friends have bought one. The focus then shifts from information about objects to information about persons."[22] Perhaps equally as important as investigation of what those who have chosen private education know about the option they have chosen is an exploration of the patterns of social interaction through which their contact with the school and their opinion of its strengths and weaknesses was formed. The social network surrounding the school is probably more important than the objective information available on the school. At the very least, it is through and within this social network that the information is transmitted, processed, and evaluated.

Conclusions

The implications of the issues raised propose significant challenges for private schools as they find their way to the year 2000. Declining pools of students in the population in general, and especially in geographical areas where the majority of private schools exist, inevitably will mean the demise of many private schools (and

colleges). Those that remain will be challenged to mount programs to meet the needs of more heterogeneous student bodies. The transition to a broader spectrum of academic abilities will not be easy for faculties accustomed to different roles and tasks—faculties in which there will be minimal turnover. Administrators can anticipate the same reluctant adaptation that has characterized the faculties of small liberal arts colleges, which are now faced with more diverse, less academically capable, more career-oriented students. The focus of the transition may be as much on the retraining of faculties as on the development of new programs.

The tension between centralization and independence will intensify in the next 2 decades. Attempts by outside agencies to control education at the local school level (e.g., State minimum competency testing and diocesan guidelines for religious education) will jeopardize local determination of educational outcomes, and, consequently, local design of programs. As Glass and Smith note, such movements are but a modern version of the perennial battle over who will control the schools.[23] The tension between increased centralization and continued independence will likely be resolved in accordance with the old adage that "he who pays the piper will call the tune."

The increasing legal-rational spirit of the times may emerge as the most serious threat to the maintenance of private schools as we have come to know them. Rehder, reflecting on the "bureaucratic drift" of American higher education, has presented an analysis that may very well prefigure the form of private secondary education in the coming decades.[24] He traces the transition of small private colleges from informal, consensual forms of governance to more formal modes of authority concerned with standardization of procedures, the fear of litigation, and the centralization of power and decisionmaking. This shift has created a different organizational environment for higher education—one that does not always support academic values and purposes. It seems clear that the majority of colleges and universities have shifted from traditional authority to legal/rational authority. The question that lies ahead for private schools is whether forces such as collective bargaining, court decisions, and government regulation will require a similar shift away from the traditional image of education to a more bureaucratic form of operation.

Finally, the private schools, to adjust to changing environments and enrollment patterns, will be challenged to explore more fully the distinctive appeal of private schools to traditional and potential clienteles. The importance of identification with the group sponsoring the schools, as well as with the network of social interaction in which the school is involved, should become the subject of increasing attention. The future of many schools may lie: (1) in the degree to which they demonstrably serve and support the values of the sponsoring group, and (2) the effectiveness with which they promote and utilize the communication networks that permeate and hold together the religious and socioeconomic communities they serve.

The challenges confronting private schools as they move toward the 21st century are many and varied. In numerous instances, they parallel the challenges faced by private higher education during the past 20 years. Whether or how these movements will work dramatic changes on private secondary schools remains unclear at the moment. In some ways, the forces—enrollment decline, rising costs, the increasing legal/rational tendencies—seem inevitable and unstoppable. At the same time, the

very essence of private schools in the past has been their capacity to chart their own course, or to accept or reject other influences in order to serve their distinctive values and purposes. In looking to the future, it would be unfair to the history of private schools to assume anything other than that the future of private high schools will be determined and measured by the vision, imagination, and commitment of those who sponsor and lead American private secondary education.

NOTES

1. "NIE Plan to Build Educational R&D Capacity," *Educational Researcher* 3 (February 1974): 15.
2. See chapter 7 of this book.
3. The concepts of differentiation and integration that Lawrence and Lorsch develop with reference to functional departments in business organizations (i.e., research, production, sales) seem applicable to the discussion of the different perspectives of educational practitioners and researchers. Based on the distinctive tasks, there are substantial differences in time perspectives, reward systems, and interpersonal relationships, which, while constructive in terms of the function performed in and for the organization, create problems of integration of effort. Paul R. Lawrence and Jay W. Lorsch, *Organization and Environment: Managing Differentiation and Integration* (Boston: Harvard University, 1967).
4. See chapter 3.
5. Item 51 indicates that 61 percent of the principals report a greater emphasis on basic skills than was present 5 years ago. See chapter 3.
6. For example, two of the largest dioceses report significant losses in elementary school populations between 1975 and 1979. In the Diocese of Brooklyn, the number of Catholic elementary school children declined from 117,025 to 96,785 (17.3 percent); in the Archdiocese of Chicago, the decline was 161,407 to 139,527 (13.6 percent). *The Official Catholic Directory 1975* (New York: P.J. Kennedy and Sons, 1975), pp. 132, 192; *The Official Catholic Directory 1979* (New York: P.J. Kennedy and Sons, 1979), pp. 141, 201.
7. The number of high schools in the dioceses noted above declined between 1975 and 1979 from 76 to 69 in the Archdiocese of Chicago and from 29 to 24 in the Diocese of Brooklyn. *The Official Catholic Directory 1975* (New York: P.J. Kennedy and Sons, 1975), pp. 132, 192; *The Official Catholic Directory 1979* (New York: P.J. Kennedy and Sons, 1979), pp. 141, 201.
8. Thomas W. Vitullo-Martin, "No Exit—The Closing of Choice in Education," *Independent School* 38 (February 1978): 27-31.
9. See chapter 5, figure 20.
10. See chapters 4 and 6.
11. National Study of School Evaluation, *Evaluative Criteria for the Evaluation of Secondary Schools* (Arlington, Va.: National Study of School Evaluation, 1978), p. 14.
12. Examples of the articulation of community religious values intended to guide the operation of individual schools are *To Teach as Jesus Did* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1972); *Sharing the Light of the Faith: The National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States*, (Washington, D.C.: 1979).
13. The "social interaction model" of change has been widely discussed in the literature on social change. See the summary statements on this model and its strengths and weaknesses in Ivor Moorish, *Aspects of Educational Change* (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1976).
14. "Proposed Revenue Procedure on Private Tax-Exempt Schools," *Federal Register* 43, no. 163 (August 22, 1978).
15. See chapter 4.
16. E. Mark Hanson, "The Professional/Bureaucratic Interface: A Case Study," *Urban Education* 11 (October 1976): 315.
17. Max Weber, "Legitimate Authority and Bureaucracy," in D.S. Pugh, *Organization Theory* (New York: Penguin, 1971), p. 15.

18. Donald A. Erickson et al., *Characteristics and Relationships in Public and Independent Schools* (San Francisco: Center for Research on Private Education, University of San Francisco, 1979), p. 4 (summary).
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 3Iff.
20. This conclusion parallels the findings of Deci: increasing extrinsic motivation in most circumstances has the effect of decreasing intrinsic motivation. Edward L. Deci, *Intrinsic Motivation* (New York: Plenum Press, 1975).
21. Ernest R. House summarizes the research that points to the importance of personal information in *The Politics of Innovation* (Berkeley, Calif.: McCutchan, 1978).
22. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
23. Gene V. Glass and Mary L. Smith, "The Technology and Politics of Standards," *Educational Technology* 18 (May 1978): 12-18.
24. Robert R. Rehder, "The Bureaucratic Drift in the Governance of Higher Education: Insights from Organization Theory," *Educational Technology* 19 (July 1979): 7-15.

10. Observations on the Discovery of Private Schools as a Subject for Educational Research*

At the onset of the 1980's, private schools no longer seem quite the endangered species many had considered them to be only a decade before. Early predictions of imminent extinction, accompanied by warnings of added enrollment burdens on public schools have abated, at least temporarily. Despite the hard demographic reality of fewer school-age children, the decline in private school enrollments seems to have been arrested. In fact, several kinds of private schools are growing. Many families want these schools, despite rising costs. At the same time, many private school administrators look nervously to the 1990's. By then, according to recent predictions, the number of high school seniors will have declined by more than 25 percent. The geographic areas to be least affected are areas with the fewest private schools.

Government is aware of these issues and has become somewhat more responsive to private school interests. Access to existing Federal aid programs has been eased for private school children, serious debates about new forms of assistance to private school families have occurred in Congress and various States, and the new Department of Education has given private schools a greater voice in the national educational bureaucracy. A planned congressionally mandated study of school finance is notable for the unprecedented attention it proposes to give to private school trends and financial needs.

Not surprisingly, this public interest in private schools has begun to attract the interest of the Federal educational research community. Although research on private schools is by no means nonexistent, it is somewhat scanty, unfocused, and outside the mainstream of educational discourse. At this relatively early stage, it is proper to ask what kind of research the experience of private schools will stimulate.

*This chapter was written by Arthur G. Powell, director of the Commission on Educational Issues, National Association of Independent Schools.

Will these schools provide new sites for the asking of old questions? Will they generate new questions, whose answers might have applicability beyond their walls? The exploratory mapping of the research terrain reported in this volume is a revealing initial effort. Its structure, no less than its particular findings, provides important clues about current directions and future possibilities.

This discussion will be divided into three sections: a consideration of the purposes and assumptions that shaped the survey questionnaire and data analysis, a commentary on the actual findings, and some observations about future implications and steps.

Purposes and Assumptions

The questionnaire survey of 454 private high school principals was designed initially for purposes that had little to do with private schools. The central thrust of the survey instrument was to shed light on two issues drawn from the debate on public high schools in the early 1970's. At that time, several prominent national reports claimed that high school programs were inflexible and unresponsive to the individual needs of adolescents. These reports and other critics also characterized high school management as rigid, hierarchical, and bureaucratic. The two charges were intimately related, but hard evidence to substantiate them was not readily available. Consequently, NIE decided to gather data from public high school principals on school "services" and "organization."

Of course, other questions were asked as well, but the focus of the effort primarily was to learn how much programmatic diversity existed in public high schools and then to study the degree of bureaucracy in the high schools. The first problem was easy to attack in a straightforward fashion. Principals were given lists of course titles, pedagogical approaches, credit options to classroom instruction, student evaluation schemes, different facilities, and the like, and checked off those that their schools offered. The results showed far greater diversity of programs and services than the critics had implied.

The second problem was more complex. Principals, after all, might be better reporters of available programs than they would be of their own management objectives and techniques. Moreover, although it was easy to posit an alternative to program diversity (narrowness), it was not self-evident what the options to bureaucracy were. In this area, the survey analysis gained conceptual assistance from "loose coupling" organizational theory. Principals were asked not only to check off various items dealing with their perceived roles, but also different sorts of "coordination mechanisms" that gave a rough sense of how they spent their time, with whom, and for what purposes. The results indicated that public high schools were not run as "top-down" bureaucracies. Principals emphasized the public image of the school and its relations with the community. They did not give systematic attention to the day-to-day instructional process and the classroom activities of teachers. Those at the bottom had considerable autonomy; the ship was "loose" rather than tight.

These same issues dominate the private school questionnaire. In part, it aims to replicate the public high school survey. But it also contains two additional goals. Conscious of the new attention given to private schools, NIE wanted to understand their "totality . . . as an enterprise." The assumption, made explicitly at the outset,

is that extremely little of even the most rudimentary sort is known about the private sector. Some baseline data would therefore be helpful. We are thus presented with a general picture of private high schools that is largely (though not exclusively) obtained from the check-off lists of programs, services, and managerial activities originally designed for more specialized purposes.

The emphasis on the "totality" of private schools has a second purpose beyond baseline description. It easily allows for—and encourages—comparative analysis of private and public high schools seen as generic types. The ease of such comparisons is furthered by the fact that the earlier analysis of public high schools focused on characteristics that those schools had in common (program diversity, loosely coupled management). In that study, there is only scant attention given to differences *among* public high schools (e.g., regression analysis is used to examine how regional location and metropolitan status affect program offerings, management, and the types of problems principals report). The main questions under scrutiny were those whose answers applied to high schools in general.

The substantive focus of the questionnaire, the results of the previous study allowing certain generalizations to be made about "the" public high school, and the understandable commitment to comparative analysis together exerted enormous pressure on the private school study to emphasize private schools as a distinct type. At first glance, this seems perfectly reasonable. By definition, private schools *are* different, as a class, from public schools. Generally, they are voluntary associations with no direct support from government. (There are some exceptions to this generalization, such as secular New England academies that serve as public high schools for their surrounding communities, but their numbers are small.) Moreover, NIE-sponsored research by Donald A. Erickson has argued that it is precisely these fundamental, structural differences that explain the unique dynamics of private schools. Parental choice, school control over admissions, and other factors directly associated with private school governance make consideration of private schools, *as a class*, analytically productive.

And yet one of the survey's major contributions is to expose the limits of examining private schools as a single type. It does not analyze private school similarities through any data germane to the issues of affiliation and commitment Erickson raises. Moreover, as we will see, the data on program and service diversity cannot be construed to reveal that no substantial programmatic diversity exists within private schools. Diversity may or may not exist. The point is that the surveys' relentless concentration on what private schools have in common with each other may, in succeeding studies, be replaced by another approach.

Some internal breakdown, some search for a typology, some conceptualization of possible differences might have been helpful, but probably would have complicated, and perhaps even drawn attention away from, the central questions of program diversity and management practice. But it might have paid larger dividends. In particular, the reasoning behind not differentiating more fully according to religious affiliation seems unconvincing. It was argued that an extended Catholic/non-Catholic analysis would mislead because of variability among Catholic schools. That

seems reasonable enough, but the proper response would seem to be to look for appropriate differences within Catholic education (for instance, diocesan schools versus schools operated by particular orders).

It is instructive to mention here the quite careful comparison of elite boarding schools with elite suburban high schools in Leonard Baird's *The Elite Schools* (1977). Secular schools with high-income parents were remarkably similar in what they aimed to do and in what they apparently accomplished. Social class seemed more related to a school's characteristics than did its "publicness" or "privateness." It is conceivable that research focused initially on possible differences among schools, based on such factors as class, might uncover more striking patterns of similarity and difference than studies that examined how private (or public) schools were similar to each other. Even some of the inherently structural variables private school scholars have emphasized (e.g., voluntary affiliation of families) might have public sector analogies. For example, by moving or by organizing specialized alternative schools within public school districts, families exercise "choice" all the time without resorting to private schools.

The Major Findings

The survey's major generalizations present similarities among private high schools. The schools emphasize college preparation rather than vocational training and carry out that mission through a traditional academic curriculum of limited diversity. The mission of public high schools is seen as less specialized, largely because of the vocational dimension. The public schools serve a broader income clientele with more diverse goals for graduates. If the mission and program of private high schools seems different from public schools, management practice in the two sectors is remarkably similar. Whether public or private, American high schools are not run in a "top-down" manner.

At the outset, we learn certain general characteristics of the surveyed schools and their members. Over three-quarters are Catholic. Most are located in the East and Midwest; they are rarely found in rural areas. This geographical distribution largely reflects Catholic residential patterns, but additional factors also may be at work. "Independent" private schools, for example, also are not distributed according to the population as a whole. It is conceivable that historical research might reveal relationships between independent school founding and shifting residential patterns in older urban areas. One might hypothesize, for instance, that ethnic or social class shifts among towns or cities, or even within them, made public school populations more heterogeneous and perhaps redistributed educational power (and hence school values) from one group to another. Where this happened, and where residential relocation seemed undesirable, private schools embodying displaced family values might flourish. In areas which maintained some geographical homogeneity of social class and/or ethnic group over time, there would be less need for the economically irrational decision to found private schools.

An important difference in school population is size. Private high schools are generally much smaller than public high schools. Moreover, the private school principals tend to see small size as an asset, whereas public school principals tend to

see smallness as a liability. It would be interesting to inquire further into this finding. Are public high schools, given the professional socialization that their principals and teachers have undergone, more interested in the additional specialized professional resources that large size allows? Are private schools less concerned about a wide array of specializations and educational treatments—the "things money can buy"—and more interested in the closer interpersonal relations and sense of community that smaller size facilitates? From where are such different attitudes derived? Are they a product of the strong historical association between the "professionalizing" movement in schools of education and the public schools? Do they express subtle value differences about the nature of effective educational environments?

From another perspective, we might ask whether the size of comprehensive public schools is really the best basis for comparison with private schools. Many public high schools, after all, have distinctive and homogeneous (in terms of post-high school expectations) student subcultures. These tracks efficiently differentiate students within public high schools, and in one way or another have been the target of egalitarian reformers for years. Might it not be instructive to compare college-oriented private schools to college-oriented public school subcultures? Size differences might then be less notable. It would be interesting to see the differences, if any, between college-bound populations when they comprise entire schools and similarly homogeneous populations when they are part of larger, more variegated enterprises.

Private high school students come from families higher on the socioeconomic scale than do public high school students (as measured by principals' opinions of parent occupation and type of family housing). Since private schools charge tuition, this finding is unsurprising and, indeed, seems built into the American system of school finance. It would be valuable to learn with greater precision what class or economic variability there is *within* the private and public sectors. One can accept the correctness of the survey's generalization and still wonder what it conceals. Suppose one looked at the family income profile of center-city Catholic high schools compared with elite suburban public high schools. If one could uncover evidence of substantial family *sacrifice*—a concept ruled out by the survey's perfectly correct generalization—one might better ponder the factors that shape the educational behavior of many nonaffluent American families.

The survey's conclusion with regard to income is most interesting when juxtaposed with its data on racial composition. The racial composition of private high schools is about the same as that of public high schools. Since it is well known that racial minorities have somewhat lower incomes than the white majority, the inference is that higher income minority families disproportionately patronize private schools. One might speculate, given residential patterns in this country, that it is simply one more piece of evidence that class matters more than race in parental preferences.

The next chapter presents data to support the conclusion that private schools have (compared with public schools) fairly narrow, traditional, and academic programs geared mainly to college preparation. But the notion of broadness or diversity is vague. As presented, it is not simply a description of what is, but a perspective on what broadness *should* include. One must remember that school principals were not

asked what was taught, but whether they offered courses listed in the questionnaire. For example, schools were asked about a required English course, but not about the range or diversity of offerings in language and literature. Social studies seems to have been omitted entirely. We do not know what range of periods are treated in history courses, or what is offered in area studies, economics, or government. Nor do we know to what extent schools, in the sciences, have moved beyond the century-old triumverate of biology, chemistry, and physics. The arts are neglected.

Thus the conclusion that "private schools do not appear to have a broad curriculum"—while it is conceivably correct—does not seem quite warranted by the data at hand. A curriculum that does not give full attention to vocational preparation might still be broad. Nor was any attention given to different notions of what a course might include. It is at least conceivable that a school's offering in biology, let us say, might be notable not merely for its existence, but for its content or execution. How does it deal with molecular biology, for example? Diversity may be expressed not only by a range of titles, but also by different ways (more or less complex) of conceptualizing the same subject. Similar labels can mask different substance. One can grant the use of a checklist of titles as a device to get a rough sense of whether a school's total curriculum seems broad, but it is dangerous to carry such a method too far. The differences between a liberal arts curriculum at Yale and at a community college extend beyond course titles.

Thus, I am not sure how much we can seriously conclude about the extent of course diversity, either within the private sector or between the private and public sector. In general, the categories of the study reveal few differences between the sectors, although that might be a function of the categories rather than a description of the schools. One main difference, of course, is the greater emphasis on direct vocational studies in public high schools. Even this does not mean private schools are insensitive to the career education campaign of recent years. Twenty-four percent of them have a course on career exploration—only four percent less than public high schools. Perhaps the most interesting curriculum difference, particularly when related to principals' opinions of parent wishes reported later, is the greater private school commitment to formal instruction in moral education and values clarification. Presumably because of their religious orientation, these academically specialized institutions care more about the distinctly nonacademic world of values than their public school counterparts. Whether they define values in similar or different ways and whether they try to implement their concern in ways other than formal courses, are interesting matters for further study.

The survey measures "individualizing" instruction in many ways beyond course diversity. It presents data on credit alternatives to classroom instruction, pedagogical strategies geared at individual learning, evaluation systems, and school facilities. There seems to be substantial surface flexibility in both public and private sectors, but the flexibility within private schools is mainly confined to the academic, college-oriented sphere, which is their major raison d'etre. Nearly twice as many private high schools, for example, offer college level courses on their own campus, while more than twice as many public schools offer school credit for off-campus work experience or occupational training. Private schools are more likely to employ ability

grouping and Advanced Placement courses, and less likely to offer remedial basic skills. Private high schools send more of their graduates to 4-year colleges.

The images of specialized college preparation versus comprehensive attention to a wider range of career needs increase, but the situation seems far more complex than these images. What about the 49 percent of private high schools that do *not* offer A.P. courses, and the 40 percent of public high schools that do? Certainly there are important similarities that cut across the public-private dichotomy. Even the category of "college preparation" lacks the analytic clarity in the 1980's that it perhaps had in the 1920's. Today there are many different kinds of colleges, even 4-year colleges. "College preparation" previously suggested similarities in high school aims. Now it suggests differences.

The central point of the chapters on management practices is not that principals have no power, but that they exercise power and define their roles in ways that have little to do with classroom instruction and the behavior of teachers. The principal, in public or private schools, is not primarily a manager of the learning process at all. He or she focuses more on external than internal constituencies, and, in particular, worries about the image of the school in the minds of those constituents.

The analysis raises at least two interesting issues. It deemphasizes differences among the activities of public and private school principals, which is mildly counterintuitive. In terms of school finance and student recruitment, to name just two factors, the roles of public and private principals would seem to differ considerably, even if we assume that there is substantial variability among private school heads in the degree that they worry about these issues. But on closer examination, the survey accepts these role differences, with the important distinction that, although private schools in some respects are like businesses, they usually are not run according to "top-down" strategies of efficiency and rational control. They are not profitmaking enterprises, such as "Kentucky Fried Children" day-care franchises, and they confound attempts to explain their activities by conventional economic models.

The other issue involves the principal as an educational leader. The thrust of analysis seems to regard "leadership" as an external, clever, primarily public relations skill. Innovations, it is said, are frequently created for their symbolic existence rather than for any discernible effect they may have on students. But this analysis seems incomplete at a time when the importance of the principal as an *internal* leader—a shaper (at least in part) not only of a school's public image but of its internal climate—has gained new public attention.

How does he or she lead internally? Presumably private school heads have a few structural advantages over their public school colleagues. There are, for example, fewer veto groups. Many private schools already exemplify the new reform goal of "school site management." The power of many private school heads over the composition of their staffs is also remarkable in comparison with public school principals. Lacking unions or long-term contracts, private school teachers are often vulnerable to the wishes of their superiors. Yet it is unclear how or even whether a private school principal makes use of this apparent power. Does his situation enable him to lead any more effectively than public school principals? (Apparently he remains in a particular job less than his public counterpart.) The analysis before

us, in short, reveals a good deal about general characteristics of management practice, but little about the dynamics of creative leadership within schools.

The survey ends by considering principals' educational goals, satisfactions, and problems, as well as the goals they attribute to parents. Goals were chosen from a preselected list. Thus, we learn that virtually all principals value "basic skills," but we do not know whether they are referring to more elementary skills, such as reading and computation, or more complex skills such as reasoning, or both. Similarly, we learn that few value "esthetic appreciation," but do not learn whether this means they downplay literature, the arts, or both, or neither. Certain goals that might be significant, such as the cultivation of interests as distinct from achievement, were not included as options.

Within the available categories, principals seem to share similar educational objectives. There is little reported variation among private school heads, or between private and public principals. The single exception, not surprisingly, is direct vocational preparation. Conceivably, some additional categories might reveal greater differences than are now apparent. Virtually all principals, for example, place a high premium on "high moral standards and citizenship." Perhaps private schools, with their greater religious orientation, would emphasize the first part of the phrase more than the second. Schools, moreover, may convey very different notions of morality and citizenship. E. Digby Baltzell's recent comparison of leadership styles in Philadelphia and Boston (*Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia*, 1979) suggests that Quaker schools teach a notion of public responsibility that is distinctly different from that purveyed by elite New England schools. The point is that the meaning of certain goals, to schools and probably to parents, resides not in the general label, but in the details and subtleties.

If the public and private principals share roughly similar educational goals, their perceptions of parental goals are quite different. They report a broader range of educational goals among private school parents. As would be expected, private school heads perceive the parents of the children they teach as caring more about college preparation and less about vocational training. Surprisingly, the other reported differences between the two parental groups do not lie on the academic-vocational continuum. Both groups care deeply about basic skills and little about esthetic appreciation. They differ in their interest in goals that are more personal and less academic: moral and citizenship education, learning to get along with one another, and learning to take responsibility for one's future learning. Ironically, schools with a presumably specialized academic function serve a parent constituency with more comprehensive objectives than their public school counterparts. Is this another manifestation of the religious orientation of most private schools, is it social class and previous educational attainment, or something else?

Given these findings, one might hypothesize that—in spite of the admitted college preparatory function of private high schools—a central motive for parent interest in them might have less to do with academic achievement and more to do with the development of a cluster of personal traits. In this regard, it is notable that one supposedly elite group of private schools, those represented by the National Association of Independent Schools, do not produce graduates of substantially greater academic achievement than the college-preparatory tracks of public high schools.

The mean score, averaged over all 1979 College Board achievement tests, was 534 for students in NAIS schools and 529 for all students who took the tests (*Independent School*, December 1979). When parents purchase private education they do not receive, in the aggregate, greater achievement, nor from this survey was achievement their most distinctive concern when compared with public high school parents.

There is greater congruity between principal aims and parent aims in private high schools than in public schools. In other words, private school parents seem to share the broad goals of their principals more than public school parents share the equally broad goals of their principals. The essay by Garner and Hannaway on parent-school relations subjects this finding to greater analytic scrutiny and notes that even within private schools there is more incongruity between principal and parental goals than is evident. The higher the class or economic level of parents, the more they endorse the broad goals of the schools.

Their explanation focuses on the presumption that higher SES parents are better informed about the goals of schools and therefore make more rational school selections. But it may not be necessary to explain these differences by the ignorance of lower status parents who might have ample information about a school's goals, but may disagree with or be in conflict with some of them. The decision to send their children to private schools may represent a difficult value trade-off. On the one hand, they might value achievement, the promise of social mobility, and the relative calmness and safety represented by a more homogeneous environment. On the other hand, many of the school's other values in personal morality and academics (i.e., relativism, questioning of authority) may be at variance with their own. One immediately thinks of the Black Protestant adolescent in a mainly white Catholic high school, or the working class Catholic adolescent enrolled in a "progressive" independent school. If private schools choose or are forced to expand their constituencies and become more variegated, it will be interesting to see how long they can maintain the confluence of school and family educational values reported in the survey.

The satisfactions and problems of principals are the final major topic covered by the data. Principals of all types generally seem satisfied and have few problems. Not surprisingly, public high school principals with the most problems are located in urban areas with substantial internal school conflict and a high percentage of low SES students. Private schools have selective procedures to minimize conflict and they enroll relatively few low SES students. Those schools reveal very few problems. Yet it is startling that they seem to have *so* few problems. Is this because they are really the protected sanctuaries they are popularly thought to be? Or does the data reflect a peculiarly turbulence-free moment in educational history? Perhaps this is true, but it also may be that the problems they were asked about were not really difficulties for them. They might have other problems that went untapped, such as school finance, student recruitment, the desirability or undesirability of the current mix of students, drugs, or particular educational outcomes (e.g., the development of student interests). Perhaps a more finely tuned analysis, geared to the circumstances of private schools, would have revealed that all was not perfect.

Implications

The value of these findings lies more in clues they suggest for further inquiry than in any direct implications for educational practice. The first concern was to examine programs and services to detect whether individual needs were taken into account. We learned that private high schools gave little attention to direct vocational preparation. But we also learned that their specialized purpose did not include vocational preparation, so it was difficult to conclude that these schools were inattentive to individual needs. When student attendance is voluntary it does not necessarily imply unconcern for individualization. Indeed, on almost every other measured dimension except vocation, private high schools seem to "individualize" just as well as public high schools, and even more so within the academic realm. Moreover, private school parents (as perceived by principals) seem to prefer a larger commitment to personal, nonacademic development (although it is not clear how or whether private high schools implement this interest in ways beyond formal courses in "values clarification" and the like).

If the data do not suggest inattention to individualization, neither do they confirm that, *in practice*, private or public high schools are successful at it. The data consist of lists of professional services offered. Although we know about an array of impressive pedagogical labels, we need to know more about the nature of service delivery at the point of actual adult interaction with adolescents. It would be discouraging indeed if private high schools were to use these findings as comforting evidence that all was well. We do not really know. Some clues suggest that things may not be well. Certain central features of schooling, such as the timing of formal instruction, seem remarkably rigid across all types of secondary schools. Other indicators, such as A.P. courses, appear in only half the institutions supposedly specializing in preparation for 4-year colleges. There is little cause for contentment in such findings.

From the survey's equally central concern for management practice, we learn that the schools are not "top-down" bureaucracies. Though this finding may constructively confound a few critics, many will say "We always knew that." Moreover, practitioners are concerned with the differences between principals—some are good, others less so— rather than with general similarities in principal roles. For practitioners, effective leadership involves skills applied to internal constituencies of students and teachers as well as to external groups. It is not clear how the data on management style informs knowledge of the characteristics of effective or ineffective school leaders, or how (if at all) such qualities can be nurtured deliberately.

The last major concern of the survey is to characterize the totality of the private high school enterprise and to compare it with public high schools. As we have said earlier, the shock of recognition practitioners may gain from the survey's generalizations does not expand their understanding very much or challenge many stereotypes. Probably the most useful image (because it does challenge some private school folklore) is the impression of sameness that it conveyed throughout the study. From time to time, when private schools feel the need to defend themselves against external threats, they resort to arguments which emphasize their diversity from

public schools and from each other. They claim to offer options, alternatives, different models, which add variety to the educational scene.

The survey hardly lends much support to that argument, and so it is constructive for private schools to examine the nature of the diversity they say they exemplify. On the other hand, the survey does not refute the claims. We have observed that the strategy of the inquiry did not lend itself to looking for internal differences. Nor did it lend itself to inquiry about similarities between certain kinds of private schools and certain public schools, if factors such as family SES or ethnic and religious affiliation were held constant. One implication that should *not* be drawn is that, even if private schools can be described as different from public schools on some dimensions, those differences are the most significant for practice. Indeed, there are areas where a somewhat different focus, following up on clues provided in the survey, might reveal significant differences among private schools and significant overlap with public school concerns.

From the survey we receive the cumulative impression that private high schools are environments with widely shared agreement by all participants on purposes and internal practices. The nature of that consensus might vary somewhat from school to school—we did not explore such differences—but schools are similar in that a common "climate" or "ethos" prevails in each. This suggested characteristic of private schools is also an emerging theme of research and practice on public schools. A shared consensus seems an important ingredient of "effective" schools. The highly publicized study of Michael Rutter and associates (*Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and their Effects on Children*, 1979) argues that schools with similar student bodies but different "climates" have substantially different effects.

Private schools are useful natural experiments to examine more closely the idea of school climates. We know very little about describing functional climates (as distinct from reporting official claims on what schools "stand for"). Are there many different kinds of climates, or a few types? We also know little about how climates are established and nurtured. How important is a charismatic principal, historical tradition, or an authority structure that permits distinctive rules and values to be unambiguously maintained? Does confluence between parental and principal values alone guarantee a certain climate? Or do the adolescents still have to be recruited to accept the goals and rules of the adult game? How successful are the adults in this regard? The analytic advantage of private schools is that there often are great opportunities in creating and maintaining climates, and thus they might provide more clear examples of how it is done and what its consequences are.

A second theme concerns the idea of the "professional" teacher. Much of the survey's design implicitly defines educational programs and services as discrete scientific treatments that are applied by professionals to adolescents. The greater the array of treatments, the better the school or teacher. This conception of a teacher's role was given great impetus by the university effort to develop education as a science and a profession, and has dominated teacher education during this century. Much of private schooling, however, has so far remained outside the framework of public school teacher education and certification. Other notions of the effective teacher have flourished in them. Just as private schools are natural experiments to

examine the idea of school climate, they also can help to examine these differences in teacher role.

The alternative model to the scientific teacher emphasizes qualities of character and personality above those of well-honed professional skills. It stresses commitment to adolescents and to a field of knowledge. It tends to regard teaching, even straightforward cognitive teaching, as a human transaction whose success depends, in part, on emotional considerations. The "good" teacher is an exemplar of a certain lifestyle.

Some of these traits perhaps explain the simultaneous commitment many parents make to academics and moral or character development as educational goals. The two are not sharply contrasting, but flow ideally from the same adult models. These traits may also help explain why "achievement" is not the only academic objective parents seek. This model of teaching emphasizes the development of interests in addition to (perhaps even more than) the inculcation of skills.

The point is not that this model dominates private schools or is absent from public schools. Clearly, that is not the case. But research on high school teachers has not paid it much attention. We know little about how many teachers embody it, the conditions that allow it to survive and flourish, and the effects it has on adolescents or even on school climate.

Finally, the market for private schools, along with the willingness of many families to relocate to change public schools, shows that it is misleading to describe parental goals only in generic terms such as college or vocational preparation. The survey shows how much overlap in program offerings there is across high schools of all sorts. The most crucial distinctions parents make between schools—within the private and public sectors as well as between them—might not be distinctions in mission as much as in quality. Surely if the discovery of private schools by researchers and policymakers has no other effect, it should reinvigorate interest in educational excellence. Excellence, of course, is a difficult and elusive concept, especially in egalitarian times. It means attention to different tastes and values. And it means not just a concern for long-term "outcomes," but for an immediate sense of richness and excitement. There is no single standard of quality to strive for, in contrast to the hope that all might score at a certain minimal level on reading achievement tests.

The notions of climate and teacher role are two devices with promise to expose important aspects of school quality. They might enable us to describe more precisely the differences among institutions which outwardly look very similar, but which generate in families, students, and teachers, very different feelings of commitment and satisfaction.

As more American parents enjoy more education, they become more self-conscious about their personal educational preferences and tastes, and they develop more articulate and specialized ideas about the educational quality they seek for their children. Schools of all kinds will be under increasing pressure to deliver not just a common product which eliminates historic inequalities, but a differentiated product which expresses different notions of quality. The new burden on schools is caused not by education's failures, but by its successes. Close attention to the dynamics of private schools, which historically have catered to more specialized tastes, may provide some welcome insight in these new circumstances.

11. *Public Policy and Private Education**

In the short history of Federal support for educational research, private elementary and secondary schools have received little attention. In large measure this is because government has limited responsibility for private education. But, as interest increases in proposals to provide public funds for private schooling, government attention to private education is certain to accelerate.

Private schools are also intrinsically interesting since they provide models of different, if not "best," practice. Private schools offer the only natural domestic laboratory with which public schools can be compared. The differences among private schools themselves are also substantial. In short, private schools should provide an opportunity to observe and study the effects of widely varying forms of organization, governance, and pedagogy.

The quality of private education is also important because it represents a paid alternative to a free system of public schools. Consumers of private education are willing to pay the price for the service they are buying.

Historically, the private education data base has been weak—only good enough to permit general observations about size and scale. Fortunately, both the quantity and quality of data are improving, and as they get better more detailed observation will be possible. This study is one step in that process.

An important development for researchers and policy analysts is that the National Center for Educational Statistics is now gathering private education data on an annual basis. The Congress, in its recently mandated study of school finance, also calls for a major substudy of private schools. Public and private interest in the subject of private education is not running parallel, it is beginning to converge.

Finally, both major political party platforms called for some form of public support for private education in 1976. The near passage in 1979 of the Moynihan-Packwood Tuition Tax Credit Legislation is only the latest and most dramatic indicator of growing interest in this question.

*This chapter was written by Denis P. Doyle, Director, Program Integration, Office of Assistant Secretary for Research and Improvement.

In addition to the Government's increasing research interest, private education now has a seat at the Government's policymaking table. The Education Amendments of 1978 created the position of Deputy Assistant Secretary for private education, in the former Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. With access to the Secretary and the Commissioner, the new position was important for symbolic and practical reasons. In the new Department of Education this position has been upgraded to one of an Assistant Secretary. These developments represent a significant new commitment by the Federal Government to private school issues.

The growth of Government interest in private school questions is paralleled and reinforced by developments in the private school world itself. For the first time, there is now a Washington-based private school advocacy group—the Council for American Private Education (CAPE)—which represents the schools enrolling approximately 90 percent of the children attending the Nation's private schools. In addition, the American Education Research Association (AERA) now includes a private school study group, Associates for Research on Private Education. Furthermore, the University of San Francisco has just established a new private school research organization, the Center for Research on Private Education.[1]

Trends

A number of short- and long-term trends also suggest an increasing interest in private schooling. Important shifts in family size, composition, and employment are having an impact on family taste in education. Not only is the onset of first childbearing being postponed, many middle class families today have fewer children. Fewer children born later means more disposable income and a lowering of the total cost of private school for the family. The number of intact families with both husband and wife working full-time also continues to climb, surpassing 50 percent in 1979. This percentage is expected to increase in the 1980's. Even with inflation, this development means more money in the family pocketbook for marginal expenditures such as private education.

In light of the powerful belief in this country in the efficacy and importance of education, middle class parents in particular are highly motivated in their quest for "good" education. Many middle class parents, who see education as central to long-term income production, are buying into a "human capital" theory of educational investment. Increasingly, they appear to be willing to "invest" in private schooling. This phenomenon is by no means racially oriented; in fact, the class linkage is so strong that middle class blacks are overrepresented in private schools.

This is important to note, because in many minds the term "private school" conjures up images of elite boarding schools, preparing Holden Caulfield and his friends for their places in the adult world. But the fact is that the principal provider of private education in this country has been the Catholic Church with its far-reaching system of Diocesan and order-run schools. In a statistical profile, they look very much like an "average" American. Unless a special subset is selected, private education seems to be a nonelite enterprise. Private school students may be characterized by high motivation, or membership in a particular religious community; but only a small fraction are "elite" as that term is ordinarily used. Elite academic

institutions, principally members of the National Association of Independent Schools, account for only 6.2 percent of private school enrollments.[2]

Private Schools and Government Control

Since *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* in 1928, when the Supreme Court upheld a citizen's right to satisfy compulsory attendance laws in private schools, few serious efforts to narrow the scope of private education have been launched. In fact, in recent years the individual's right to escape public education has been strengthened, both by statute and case law. In California, for example, which requires attendance until age 18, a student with a passing score on a proficiency examination can at 16 with parental consent, leave school. Amish children are no longer required to attend public school past age 14 in Wisconsin because such participation would violate their religious liberty. Most recently, there has been a significant growth in "home teaching," a minimovement in which parents withdraw their children from school and provide home instruction. Although it does not yet enjoy the protection of more than a few State courts, all reports suggest that such activities are growing and that a recent Massachusetts court case giving wide latitude to parents will serve as case law for other jurisdictions.[3]

In a recent case in Kentucky, the ability of the State Board of Education to regulate private schools has been significantly curtailed. The court found that "state accreditation standards may not be applied to private and parochial schools in accomplishing the constitutional purpose of compulsory education..."[4]

Special Interest Politics

One final development ties a number of these loose ends together, and that is the virtual collapse of the old public education lobby. Long a powerful and successful horizontally organized advocacy group, the public education "lobby" was a loose coalition of parents, teachers, administrators, and board members. That lobby is now a fading memory. As in other parts of national life, powerful and effective special interest groups are replacing it. The most recent successful example is the special education lobby, which singlehandedly pushed for and secured enactment of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act.

There is growing evidence that private schooling is increasingly a concern of a potent "special interest group"—the middle class. No longer the exclusive province of either coreligionists with a shared purpose or the very wealthy, the parochial and elite college preparatory schools are being bridged by secular, academic day schools designed to serve the middle class.[5] In a middle class country, as the middle class goes, so goes public policy. It should be no surprise, then, that private schools are beginning to move closer to the top of the Nation's education agenda. Equally, it should be no surprise that the principal public policy question is whether private schools should receive financial support.

Public policy and money are so intimately bound together that it is difficult to think of examples of one without the other. As long as no public monies flowed to

private education, there was little reason for public policymakers to concern themselves with it. But as pressure continues to build for some form of public support, private school questions will be put before the public.

Public Support and Private Schools

A summary examination of those areas in which there is already public support for the private sector is illuminating. With the exception of a few federally funded programs (programs for the disadvantaged, handicapped, and libraries), the only substantial public support for private education is embedded in the various tax codes of the several layers of government. The list is short but instructive: at the State and local level private schools usually escape property taxes on real property and improvements used for school purposes. As private nonprofit corporations, most private schools are free of use and sales taxes, as well as income taxes. Individuals and corporations may deduct contributions from their income taxes to qualifying institutions, and private schools enjoy subsidized mailing privileges as do other nonprofit organizations. Variations from jurisdiction to jurisdiction in these patterns exist, but most private schools enjoy these "negative" transfer payments from Government. The benefits are not inconsequential. The two most important, of course, are exemption from property taxes and the capacity of private schools to receive tax-free donations. The former substantially reduces school costs, and the latter is thought to stimulate school revenues.[6]

The reasons behind the absence of a "positive" Government program of public support for private schools are several and deserve some passing comment because the United States is almost alone among industrialized democracies in not supporting private schools.[7] Our existing public school system is the lineal descendant of the first religious schools in the English-speaking part of the New World.[8] In the Massachusetts Bay Colony, for example, schools were required by law to service the public. That they were denominational was a matter of course. It was not until well into the 19th century that secular public rather than denominational schools began to exist on a wide scale. Although most historians regard this movement as a straightforward decision to avoid *any* religious "taint," it is arguable. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and other students of private schools assert that the effort to secularize the "public" schools was as much an effort to keep them free of Catholic teachings as to keep them free of general religious influence.[9] Nevertheless, the process was virtually complete by the mid-19th century, and a body of case law supporting and reinforcing secularization began to build in the early and middle 20th century.

Church and State

Religious instruction appears to pose the major hurdle in the funding of private education, for the legal issue is moot if consideration is given to funding only

secular private schools. A test of this point would presumably be upheld. The legal issue of public support for private education arises only when religiously affiliated or oriented schools are considered. Most authorities on constitutional law agree that public monies may not be spent for private sectarian schooling, and only a handful of legal scholars believe that Government tuition aid to elementary and secondary religious schools will not be struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court.[10]

The issue is confusing because of apparently contradictory legal rulings. On the basis of the recent Byrne decision, a New Jersey tax deduction scheme was found unconstitutional (see footnote 7). In a similar case, however, a three-judge Federal panel upheld Minnesota's system of tax deductions for private and public school expenditures. Unlike New Jersey, the Minnesota program extended benefits to public as well as private school students for such things as laboratory fees, field trips, and related expenses. If the primary "beneficiaries" are students rather than schools, some constitutional scholars believe that public financing may be upheld, but that remains to be seen.

This facet of constitutional law is a thicket of confusing claims and counterclaims. Federal case law permits the purchase of books for children in parochial schools but not maps (can they buy atlases, one wonders?). Children can be bused to and from parochial school, but they cannot use the same buses for field trips when they are at school. Voluntary contributions to religious institutions are tax deductible, and certain types of religious structures and property are exempt from property tax. Because these practices are "passive abstentions" by the Government and do not necessitate excessive contact between church and State, they are held to be constitutional.

This legal uncertainty is due, in large part, to the tension between the "free exercise" and "establishment" clauses of the first amendment. The former guarantees the individual's right to the free exercise of religion, while the latter prohibits any Government action that might establish religion. In a wide variety of court cases, various forms of public aid have been found to violate the constitution. So called "parochaid," direct support schemes involving outright payments to religious schools, have been struck down, as have shared time and shared facilities plans. What remains untested by the U.S. Supreme Court is tax credits, deductions, or educational vouchers. Whether these measures incline toward the free exercise clause or the establishment clause has not been finally determined.[11]

As a "passive" program, tax credits probably offend fewer people than an active program of direct transfer payments. The former have the added dimension of being "noneducational," that is, tax credit legislation is the responsibility of tax and revenue committees of legislatures, not education committees. Because tax credits are the most likely form of aid in terms of possible constitutionality and public acceptability, it is no surprise that supporters of aid to private school schemes are looking most actively at the tax system as a source of public funding.

Private Schools: Lesson for Public Policy

As a program of Government support for private schools begins to be debated seriously, interest in private schools will increase. Where interest exists among policymakers, research is not far behind.

Systematic research is necessary to begin to assess the probable impact of public support programs. The debate is a fiery one, clouded with passionate claims and counterclaims about church-state separation, racial and social class isolation, and academic elitism. A carefully designed set of research projects could begin to illuminate some of these questions systematically. As I have tried to suggest, the principal public policy question about private schools is whether they should receive public support. An equally important question to the private school community is at what cost in diminished autonomy? Research, of course, cannot answer the political question about the appropriateness of public support, but it can help to illuminate the impact of alternative decisions.

A better understanding of the reasons parents choose fee-charging institutions, for example, would help in assessing the probable impact of public support schemes. Would public support be likely to increase the number of children attending private schools, and if so, which categories of children? Would poor children be more or less likely to attend, or would general support become a transfer payment program for the middle class? Final answers to these and similar questions exceed the capabilities of social science research, but carefully reasoned (if only tentative) findings would help inform public discussion.

The other important public policy question that research can help answer is, what do public schools have to learn from private schools? What public school policies can profit from greater knowledge about private school behavior, organization, and pedagogy?

Central to an understanding of the drawing powers of private schools is the question of quality. Any discussion about the differences between the public and private sector must address it. The issue is starkly cast in economic terms: why are people willing to pay for a service that is otherwise "free?" The answer lies in the degree to which the services are dissimilar, or perceived to be dissimilar. Parents of children in private schools, from the least to the most expensive, are paying out of pocket for their vision of a quality differential. Clearly that differential exists on some sliding scale of income and mix of public/private school perceptions.

In fact, the principal findings of this book confirm two generally held views:

- Private schools and public schools are managed and organized in ways that are so similar that there are few measurable, quantifiable differences among them.
- It appears that public schools are serving a broad, social, "equity" mission and that private schools are serving a more narrowly focused "academic" mission.

Of the two findings we could conclude that the first simply confirms the belief that there is, indeed, a "culture of education" in the United States. The pedagogy, organization, purposes, teacher training, physical plants, administrative style, and governance of both public and private schools are cast from the same mold.

The quality issue, however, is cast in its simplest but most potent form. To fee-paying parents, at least, private schools provide a "better" education than in a corresponding public school. Whether this perception is amenable to factual resolution is less important than the "fact" that preferences for quality differentials are highly subjective. Because there is no "objective" production function for

education, quality decisions are necessarily subjective and personal. Although it is true that a variety of factors influence the private school parent's decision, in the final analysis it is a statement of preference.

A School is a School is a School...

The spectrum across which schools fall in our society is not one of kind but one of quality. Good schools are not fundamentally different; they are good in that they are a better expression of a common form.

A quality differential, then, even if it is subjective, is a double-edged sword. If and when public schools exhibit "better" quality, they can hold or even recapture clients. There is no a priori reason that private schools should have a necessary advantage in the contest for students, or in their ability to attract students. To the contrary, access to the public purse should provide public schools with a solid, competitive footing. Even when the most clumsy proxy for quality is used, the production of National Merit Scholars, for example, public schools do very well. Of the top ten schools in the production of Merit Scholars, only two are private.[12]

School Quality: The Problem of Measurement

The principal question raised by private schools for public schools, then, is precisely the hardest question for research to answer: what are the quality differentials, how are they measured, and how might they be replicated in the public sector? This question has special urgency if the first part of the analysis is correct. If private schools are next in line for public support, public schools should know today how they might change to compete tomorrow.

The issue of school quality, however, has been virtually off limits to American researchers because of the intellectual milieu of the last decade. It has become fashionable to assert that no one knows what works and that we would not recognize it if we were to see it in any case. This might say more about researchers and the academic disciplines that underpin them than about schools, but the issue of school quality has been skirted carefully since the Coleman report.[13]

The reader will remember that Coleman's central finding is that what makes a difference is the student body, not the building, curriculum, level of funding, or organization. Taken in conjunction with these findings the high degree of congruence found in this study between public and private schools in their management and organization suggests that these are not the central variables that affect student outcomes. But this finding does not mean that nothing matters.

New Evidence

A new piece of research from across the Atlantic, however, *Fifteen Thousand Hours; Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children*, will certainly change the nature and substance of our discussion of this issue. As reporter William Salganik of the Baltimore *Sun* describes the study:

> Schools do indeed have an important impact on children's development, and it does matter what school a child attends.

> That sentence, which summarizes the findings of a major new research study, has surprised some Britons.
>
> As a result, the study seems destined to be as widely discussed as other studies which have led to the prevailing social science wisdom that schools do not make all that much difference....
>
> Why should the fact that good schools exist—or even the fact that good inner-city schools exist—come as a surprise to educators? The weight of social science research over the past dozen or so years has downplayed the effects of schools....
>
> The first important finding is that there are good schools, or at least relatively good schools. There are statistically significant differences among the schools on measures of student behavior and out-of-school delinquency and on attendance....
>
> In terms of exam results, the differences are so pronounced that low-ability students entering the best schools do as well on exams as high-ability students entering the worst schools....
>
> The characteristics that separate good schools from bad schools in the study fall into two categories: "ethos" and what the authors call "balance of intake." As for "ethos," there was no single characteristic which occurred in all the good schools. But good schools all tended to show the following: serious academic atmosphere, such as assigning of homework, high expectations for students; rewards for good work, such as posting good papers on the wall; opportunities for students to assume responsibility, and clear leadership but with the feeling that the principal listened to the ideas and concerns of others....
>
> If nothing else, educators are glad for an opportunity to show that schools do matter, particularly since earlier social science research was used as a justification, particularly during the Nixon administration, for cutbacks in education budgets.[14]

Fifteen Thousand Hours, then, is certain to have a dramatic impact on the debate about school quality, since it "proves" what every parent and student in America already "knows"—there are good and bad schools, and it is better to be in a good one than a bad one.

A part of the reaction to this book *must* be to stimulate research that moves in the same direction. Schooling does make a difference for individuals, it can make a difference for groups, and contemporary American research will need to expand its paradigm to determine how to measure these quality differences. Until such research appears, however, parents and policymakers are left to their own devices. By a process of reduction we find we are left with qualitative measures that work at a micro but not at a macro level. In America at least, research cannot yet tell us the difference between a good school and a bad school. But a teacher, student, or parent can. The fact that we cannot develop a commonly held, educational quality measure may be due to the fact that the task is totally misconceived. There is no such thing.

Alternately, the absence of a common scale could be due to a perfectly understandable political reason: it could be too explosive to "rank" schools, especially within one jurisdiction. With the exception of selective schools, which, by their

nature are "better," how does one justify the fact that within the same system one school is better than another? What would a superintendent say if asked to explain, let alone defend, serious quality differentials? In a society committed to a rhetoric of equality, the public defense of inequalities strains the imagination.

But that issue must be raised in academic and research circles. It has been raised with great power in other settings. In a brilliant sketch on the closing of a favorite restaurant, Richard Harris asks the owner why it folded:

> The white middle class—the people who used to eat here and go to the theatre and were the city's tax base—these people are tough and determined, and they'll put up with almost anything, even crime, to have the kind of life they want. But there is one thing they won't put up with—bad schools. They won't stand for inferior education or danger where their children are concerned. That's why they moved out of the city. And when they moved out, a business like this one was doomed.[15]

It is time for social science to address this question.

The Restoration of Judgment

Instead of suggesting that the task of measurement be abandoned, however, we might think about turning to empirically useful tools of measurement. What people find useful in the private school world is their own intellectual and aesthetic sense, and increasingly large numbers of parents are willing to put their money where their view of the world is. Private school participants vote with their pocketbooks. The issue for policymakers is to make sense out of their behavior. The implications of such findings should affect public policy toward public schools as well as toward private schools.

What, then, do private schools offer that attract students? The list is necessarily conjectural, but its plausibility is so high as to make it worth compiling:

- Academic and nonacademic standards of accomplishment.
- Professional integrity and independence for the staff.
- A decent and physically safe environment for students and teachers.
- Manageable size in terms of both the school building and the school system.
- A substantive program that satisfies the interests of its students and parents.

Private schools are also interested in moral and aesthetic development, and they are not afraid to say so.

Conclusion

Public schools, then, must begin to look at these aspects of private schools that make people willing to pay for them. Certain things public schools cannot and should not do—religious instruction, for example—is properly the province of the church or synagogue. But there is no a priori reason to believe that it makes sense to

deny public school parents the flexibility and opportunity enjoyed by private school parents. If "private school parents" vote with their pocketbooks, "public school parents" could vote with their feet. The alternatives need not be vouchers, tax credits, or scholarships to private schools. Public schools could organize themselves along curricular and philosophic lines that parallel private schools. They could introduce widespread open enrollment arrangements, and they could permit school faculties and parent associations wide latitude in running the program and the school itself. In sum, because public and private schools do fall across a common quality continuum, the task of emulating best practice is not impossible. Public schools need not turn themselves inside out to approximate the advantages private schools enjoy. The task is by no means easy, but it is not impossible.

It is almost certain that public schools will continue to satisfy society's equity mandate and serve a vast, heterogeneous population. But if private school trends are to be believed, that mandate is waning. There is a tension between equity and excellence, just as there is between liberty and equality. Americans have reconciled the two through a set of pendulum swings from one to the other. That the pendulum is swinging toward a public concern over the issues that private schools represent is incontrovertible. Public schools ignore it at their peril.

NOTES

1. CSPE is conducting a major study for NIE, examining the impact of a new school finance program recently adopted in British Columbia. As the last Canadian Province to provide public funds for private schools, this recent development is being studied with special interest.
2. See "Recent Enrollment Trends in U.S. Nonpublic Schools," in *Declining Enrollment: The Challenge of the Coming Decade*, Susan Abramowitz and Stuart Rosenfeld, eds. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 1978).
3. See Bumstead, Richard A. "Educating Your Child at Home: The Perchenilides Case," *Phi Delta Kappan*, (October 1979):97.
4. Kentucky Supreme Court; *Kentucky State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education v. Rodasill*, November 9, 1979. See the United States Law Week, 48 LW 2284 (November 23, 1979) for a summary.
5. See reference 3.
6. For an extraordinarily interesting and novel analysis of Government transfer payments to schools, both public and private, see Thomas Virtullo-Martin's article in the *City Almanac* of the New School for Social Research (December 1978). Mr. Virtullo-Martin argues that the Federal tax code operates as a powerful incentive to encourage white flight:

> The federal tax codes allow individuals to deduct from their taxable income local taxes that support public education—but not tuition to public or private schools. State and local income tax laws generally follow federal rules. The deduction of a local tax from federally taxable income is, in effect, a federal subsidy of the local tax.
>
> If a family is in the 50-percent federal tax bracket, the net increase in its total tax obligation of a $3,000 rise in property taxes is only $1,500—only $1,240 if we take into account the effects of state and city income taxes. The local government raises its revenue by $3,000 but the federal government simultaneously decreases its revenue by $1,175. Any tax deduction is, of course, worth more to a high-income family than to one with a low income. The aggregate effect of the tax-deduction system on high-income community is that the federal and state governments pay a

higher percentage of the community's tax obligation—up to 70 percent of local taxes in some New York suburbs compared with less than 15 percent of city taxes.

One social effect of this regressive tax provision is to drive high bracket taxpayers from the city. These citizens need little in the way of public services; they provide most of their own needs from their own resources. One thing they do need, however, and something they find in the suburbs, is quality education. Local suburban districts commonly concentrate as much as 80 percent of their tax revenues on support of their schools. Local taxes, in effect, are little more than tuition to these exclusive public schools. And this "tuition" is made much less costly to the families in the district because they can deduct it from their taxable income. Schools can concentrate more on the needs of upper income families, and the federal and state tax systems make it easier for the suburbs to pay for these schools.

7. At the state level, a New Jersey $1,000 income tax deduction (worth about $30 in tax liability reduction) was struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Byrne v. Public Funds for Public Schools*. This follows a trend of long standing. In another case, however, *Roemer v. Minnesota Civil Liberties Union*, a three-judge Federal panel upheld Minnesota's system of tax deductions for private and public school expenditures. In California, efforts to place a constitutional initiative on the ballot to provide a generous tax credit are underway. For a more complete discussion, see Denis P. Doyle, "The Tuition Tax Credit Proposal: Playing with Social Dynamite," The Los Angeles Times, Opinion Section, Sunday, October 28, 1979.
8. Otto F. Kraushaur, *Private Schools: From the Puritans to the Present* (Bloomington, Ill.: The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1976).
9. See Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "Government and the Ruins of Private Education," *Harpers*, April 1978, p. 28.
10. An important contribution to this debate appears in David Patrick Moynihan, "What Do You Do When the Supreme Court is Wrong?", *The Public Interest* (Fall 1979): 3.
11. An interesting addendum to this legal problem is offered by Australia, which adopted the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights as its own when it gained independence from Great Britain at the turn of the century. Australia provides public funds for private schools, and its constitutional authorities have determined that as long as the State treats all religious (and nonreligious) schools equally, neither the wall of separation is breached nor is the establishment clause offended.
12. See Diane Divoky, "A Loss of Nerve," *The Wilson Quarterly* (Autumn 1979): 118. Although the eight high-scoring public schools in her "top ten" have much larger student populations than the two private schools, the public school showing is still very strong.
13. Notable exceptions to this are Anita Summers and Barbara Wolfe, "Do Schools Make a Difference?", *American Economic Review*, (September 1977): 67, and Richard Murnane, *The Impact of School Resources on the Learning of Inner City Children*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publishing Co.), 1973. See also Richard Murnane's paper, "Interpreting the Evidence on School Effectiveness," San Diego, California, presented at the annual meeting of the American Education Finance Association.
14. William A. Salganik, "British Study Finds Sharp Differences in Schools," The Los Angeles Times, Thursday, November 22, 1979, part VIII, page 1.
15. Richard Harris, "The Lobster," *The New Yorker*, December 30, 1972, p. 40.

Postscript

The high school study was initiated to provide baseline data on secondary education organization and management and to explore the determinants of high school structure. The first phase of this undertaking relied on principals as informants. Research began in fall 1978 to gather followup information from teachers and counselors in a sample of 100 public high schools. Similar information was collected in spring 1980 from 50 private high schools. In general, this research addresses the following:

- **Congruence.** Where do principals' reports of school organization and management differ from those of teachers and counselors? What does this lack of congruence have to say about "life" in high schools?
- **Casual Linkages.** Reports from different actors will enable us to trace the influence of each organizational level on another. Phase I looked at the impact of environment and programs on school structure. Subsequent studies investigate how all these variables affect teachers and counselors.

The followup work entails several additional surveys and case studies. Specifically, this work includes the following:

1. **Teacher Survey.** The survey of teachers focuses on two different areas. First, teachers are asked a set of questions from the principal questionnaire. Analysis will determine the extent to which teacher responses differ from those of principals. In many cases we expect differences between principals and teachers since their interests are different (i.e., management vs. teaching). However, there are some topics, such as school policy issues, where discrepancies are probably illustrative of school management type, of the environment, or of the program. We also probe teacher satisfaction and attitudes about their work environment to determine the nature of staff outcomes in schools with different organizational structures.
2. **Counselor Survey.** Primarily, we investigate the nature of the counselor's role. To this end, we examine the structural and environmental conditions which may

result in the bureaucratization of the counselor's role; the extent to which counselors perform their duties to maintain organization routines; and how the counselor's role changes as structural conditions are varied. Another area of investigation has to do with interchanges among counselors, staff, and students. We want to describe counselor and staff communication patterns and the factors which either inhibit or facilitate them.

3. **Sex Education Study.** Thirty-seven percent of the principals in the Phase I sample reported that sex or family life education was offered as a separate course in their school. In light of the new initiatives announced by the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to deal with the problem of teenage pregnancy, NIE surveyed these schools to determine the nature of the courses offered, the topics covered, and the clientele served. A report describing the state of sex education and family life courses will be available by December 1981.

4. **Case Studies.** The case studies provide an in-depth view of structure and coordination in schools and participants' responses to various organizational arrangements. The survey of principals suggests that school structure does not appear to coordinate activity within the school. The question then becomes, "What function does school structure serve?" Also germane is, "What controls activity if structure doesn't?" The case studies will be reported in a volume entitled *Working Inside High Schools*, which will be available by June 1981.

5. **Environmental Study.** In addition to the data provided by principals, we have gathered an array of State- and district-level data. These data allow us to determine what important State and district leverage points exist in the schools' environment. On the State level, we have compiled such information as curriculum requirements, funding mechanisms, and staffing patterns in State departments of education. In addition, a survey of State departments of education has been undertaken to provide information about monitoring and administrative practices in State categorical programs. Our district-level profiles include such information as crime and unemployment statistics, district office staffing patterns, etc. The results of this study will be available by June 1981.

6. **Followup Survey of Principals.** Principals in schools participating in the followup phase of this research received a questionnaire which replicates much that was included in the initial survey of principals. The purpose of this followup survey was to determine if and how conditions might have changed since the first survey was administered.

Data tapes from the survey of public and private high school principals are available through the National Archives and Record Service, Machine Readable Archives Division (NNR), Washington, D.C. 20408. In light of promises of confidentiality, tapes will not contain personal identifiers.

Appendix A
Survey Results

Total number of respondents to the questionnaire = 454.
Number of valid responses to each item = n.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

1. How many students were enrolled in your school on October 1, 1976 for the 1976-77 academic year?

Enrollment	Percentage of Schools
0-249	28%
250-499	34
500-749	20
750-1,499	14
1,500 or more	06

n = 453

2. What grades are included in your school?

Grades	Percentage of Schools
9-12	73.1%
10-12	0.4
7-12	9.9
PreK or K-12	8.8
8-12	2.9
1-12	2.2
Other	2.6

n = 454

3. What percent of your student body is male?

Percentage Male Student Body	Percent of Schools
0%	24%
1-49	28
50-74	19
75-100	22

n = 445
$\bar{x}$ = 45.3% male; $\bar{x}$ = 51.7% female

4. Is your student body:

	Percent of Schools
☐ day only	83.2%
☐ resident only	3.5
☐ both day and resident	13.2

n = 453

5. Which of the following factors are considered in making admissions decisions?

Factors	Percent of Schools
Intelligence test scores	58.2%
Achievement test scores	74.8
School record	86.7
Personal references	67.3

n = 452

6. What percentage of the students enrolled in your school received financial aid to meet tuition and other school expenses?

Amount of aid	Mean Percent	n
zero	79.2%	401
< ¼ amount of expenses	6.9	387
¼ - ¾ expenses	8.5	388
> ¾	3.6	389

7. If your school is organized by subject area departments, how many departments are there?

Number of Departments	Percentage of Schools
Fewer than 5	3.1%
5-8	37.1
9-12	46.1
13-16	7.4
More than 16	1.3
Does not apply	4.9

n = 447

8. Please note the length of your school's courses for which credit is granted by placing a "1" beside the dominant length and a "2" beside all others currently used.

	Dominant Length	Also in Use
	(percentage of schools)	
Semester length	67.8%	15.3%
Quarter length	4.2	23.9
Trimester length	9.1	4.0
Minicourses	0.9	9.1
45-15 or other variant of year-round schedule	5.3	1.6
Other	11.3	3.8

n = 451

9. Please note the dominant daily scheduling system(s) currently used in your school by placing a "1" beside the dominant system and a "2" beside others currently operating.

Scheduling System	Dominant	Also in Use
	(percentage of schools)	
Traditional (35-60 minute periods)	72.3%	3.1%
Modular (10-30 minute periods)	16.8	4.2
Block or departmental (2 hours or longer)	0.4	7.7
Flexible or open (combination of timings to meet class needs)	6.0	12.2
Daily demand (student allocates own time)	0.7	2.2
Other	3.1	2.9

n = 452

10. Does your school operate on a year-round basis?

School Year	Percentage of Schools
Yes—staggered vacations	2.0%
Yes—voluntary summer school	19.6
No	78.4

n = 453

11. Some schools are organized into subschools-within-a-school. These may be distinguished by programs they offer (e.g., math-science, arts, occupations), or simply as separate administrative units (such as "house system"). If your school is organized into subunits, please check what type they are:

☐ does not apply (skip to item 14)	95.6%
☐ organized by programs (e.g., math-science, arts, career)	.7
☐ organized by administrative units (e.g., "house system")	2.6
☐ other (please specify)	1.2

n = 429

12. Number of subunits: of the 19 schools:

8 - 3 subunits
4 - 2 subunits
3 - 1 subunits
1 - 7 subunits

1 - 12 subunits
1 - 45 subunits
1 - missing

13. Is the entire school divided into subunits?

☐ yes 16 schools ☐ no 4 schools

NOTE: Items 11, 12, and 13 could not be interpreted because of the large number of nonrespondents. In addition, some principals who answered "does not apply" or who left items 7, 8, or 9 blank later answered items pertaining to subunits in their answers to items 28 or 31.

14. What type of facilities do your students or staff have access to regularly?

Type of Facility	On Campus	Elsewhere	Don't Have	n
Indoor lounge or commons for students	54.3%	.9%	44.1%	442
Career information center	78.5	3.6	15.4	441
Occupational training center	6.6	24.0	69.2	441
Media production facilities	40.3	5.4	53.2	442
Remedial reading or math lab	61.1	5.9	32.8	442
Subject area resources center(s) other than central library	46.2	5.9	46.4	442
Departmental offices	37.6	1.8	60.6	442
Teaching resource center for teachers' use	37.1	5.0	56.8	442
Childcare or nursery school facility	5.2	5.0	89.8	441
Student cafeteria	88.4	1.1	10.4	441
Alternative school or alternative school program	4.3	12.2	83.2	441

15. During the 1976-77 school year, what percentage of teachers at your school used open-space, flexible classrooms?

Percentage of Teachers	Percentage of Schools
0	76%
1-4	5
5-9	4
10 or more	11

n = 426

16. Please check all Federal or State programs from which your school or students receive funds or services.

Source of Funds	Percentage of Schools	n
Federal Title I (ESEA)	26.2%	119
State compensatory education	1.8	8
Vocational education	8.8	40
Career education	9.0	41
Special education	5.3	24
Bilingual education	0.9	4
Assistance to Indochinese refugee children	2.4	11
Library programs	57.7	262
Title IVc—innovative programs (old Title III)	18.7	85
Free or reduced-price lunch program	36.3	165
Student transportation	36.3	165
ESAA (desegregation)	2.0	9
Other	16.3	74

17. Do you have an advisory group(s) with whom you meet regularly concerning school policy and planning?

YES 85.8% NO 14.2%

n = 450

18. If "yes," how many persons are in this group(s)?

Group Members	Percentage of Schools	Mean No. of Participants	n
Assistant principals, deans, or subunit heads	75.4%	1.8	345
Guidance counselors	57.5	1.0	351
Department chairpersons	47.0	3.6	350
Teachers	53.0	6.1	349
Students	31.0	2.6	361
Parents	36.0	3.7	362
Others	20.0	1.8	351

19. Which of the following courses are taught in your school?

Course	Percentage of Schools
Biology	83.8%
Biology: BSCS	38.3
Chemistry	88.5
Chemistry: CBA Chem-Study	20.6
Physics	79.2
Physics: PSSC	23.5
French	82.7
Latin	48.7
Russian	2.4
Art	84.3
Auto mechanics	11.3
Wood or machine shop	15.5
Business education	71.5
Homemaking	47.1
Sequential math series through grade 12	92.0
Calculus	60.4

n = 452

20. How many foreign languages are offered in 3- or 4-year sequence? (Answer both questions.)

Language Sequence	Mean Number of Languages
Only three years	1.8
Four years	3.1

21. Which of the following are taught as separate courses in your school?

Course	Percentage of Schools
Family life/sex education	35.1%
Values clarification/moral education	54.2
Career exploration	21.1
Ethnic studies	13.0
Women's studies	8.5
Consumer education	46.1
Environmental or ocean studies	24.9
Sociology, anthropology, or psychology	72.4

n = 445

22. Are all 10th-, 11th-, and 12th-grade students required to take a full year of English?

Grade	Yes	No	n
	(percentage of schools)		
Tenth	100.0%	0.0%	452
Eleventh	98.7	1.3	452
Twelfth	92.4	7.6	450

23. Are 11th- or 12th-grade students grouped by ability in one or more academic subjects?

Yes 62.4% No 37.6%

n = 449

24a. About what percentage of your 10th- to 12th-grade courses are interdisciplinary or interdepartmental?

Percentage of Courses	Percentage of Schools
None	65%
1-24 percent	22
25-49 percent	21
50-74 percent	2
75 percent or more	7

n = 394

24b. About what percentage of your 10th- to 12th-grade courses are team taught?

Percentage of Courses	Percentage of Schools
None	64%
1-10 percent	29
11 percent or more	8

n = 376

25. Some schools allow students to receive credit in a variety of ways. Which of the following programs are currently available to your 9th- to 12th-grade students for credit?

Course	Percentage of Schools
Night or adult school	22.3%
College-level courses given at your school	30.9
College courses on a college or university campus	51.5
Credit by examination	19.2
Credit by contract	14.5
Independent study projects	59.4
Off-campus work experience or occupational training	37.1
Community volunteer program	26.8
Travel	13.1
Correspondence courses	23.3
Other	4.0

n = 421

26. About what percent of 11th-grade students and 12th-grade students are engaged in programs (work experience, community service, college courses, etc.) such that they are not physically present at your school full time?

Percentage of 11th Graders	Percentage of Schools
None	67%
1-5 percent	17
6-10 percent	6
More than 10 percent	10

n = 392

Percentage of 12th Graders	Percentage of Schools
None	37%
1-5 percent	23
6-10 percent	10
11-20 percent	10
More than 20 percent	16

n = 422

27. Which of the following programs does your school currently offer to students?

Program	Percentage of Schools
College advanced placement	51.1%
Early graduation	38.1
Early exit via examination (for diploma or equivalent)	2.8
Job placement service	19.7
Individually paced learning	23.4
Diagnostic-prescriptive education (DPE)	3.9
Student exchange program	16.7
Dropout prevention program	3.9
Bilingual program	4.1
Remedial basic skills instruction	53.9

n = 436

28. Approximately what percent of 11th- and 12th-grade students are involved in at least one extracurricular activity?

Percentage of 11th Graders	Percentage of Schools
Less than 25 percent	4%
25-49 percent	11
50-74 percent	31
75 percent or more	49

n = 428

Percentage of 12th Graders	Percentage of Schools
Less than 25 percent	5%
25-49 percent	12
50-74 percent	29
75 percent or more	48

n = 432

29. What grade reporting system(s) does your school use for 10th- to 12th-grade students?

System	Percentage of Schools
A-B-C-D-F	73.3%
Numerical	26.3
Percentages	10.4
Weighted (additional value for more difficult courses)	29.8
Dual (student chooses from two or more grading systems)	1.8
Pass-fail	30.5
Pass-withdraw	3.5
Verification of competency	2.2
Checklists of objectives	6.8
Written narrative evaluations	17.4
Conferences	21.9
Continuous progress	4.4
Self-evaluation	4.2
No grade reports	0.4
Other	3.3

n = 453

30. In your opinion, how important are the following educational goals to parents in your school?

Goals	Very	Moderately	Marginally	Unimportant	n
	(percentage of schools)				
Teaching the basic skills	86.9%	12.0%	1.0%	0.0%	449
Developing high moral standards and citizenship	89.6	9.7	0.7	0.0	452
Teaching students to get along with others	50.1	45.0	4.5	0.4	447
Developing individual responsibility for the management of one's own learning program	31.1	45.3	21.4	2.3	444
Preparing students for the labor market	36.5	42.7	19.0	1.8	447
Preparing students for college	76.9	20.0	2.4	0.7	451
Developing esthetic appreciation	16.9	40.0	37.3	5.8	445

Frequency of Meetings

31. How frequently do you meet with the following people to discuss school management or programs of instruction?

	Frequency						
Group	at least once a week	2 or 3 times a month	once a month	several times a year	once a year	not at all	n
	(percentage of schools)						
Governing Board Chairman	11.1%	15.6%	32.3%	30.8%	5.1%	5.1%	334
Board Finance Committee	3.9	8.8	31.8	43.6	7.3	4.5	330
Board Curriculum Committee	2.5	5.0	29.7	45.9	7.9	9.0	279
Area or Regional administrators	3.2	1.9	24.5	53.5	8.6	8.3	314
Heads of Other Schools	0.3	3.1	25.4	58.0	9.9	3.3	393
Full Governing Board	0.9	0.9	44.6	35.1	10.1	8.2	316

32. How frequently are the following *school-level* meetings held?

Group	Frequency						
	at least once a week	2 or 3 times a month	once a month	several times a year	once a year	not at all	n
	(percentage of schools)						
Regular Faculty Meetings	13.6%	18.4%	53.5%	14.5%	0.0%	0.0%	441
English department meetings	9.3	15.0	42.6	31.3	0.3	1.5	399
Math department meetings	8.4	12.5	44.2	31.7	1.3	1.8	391
Inter-departmental meetings (exclude regular faculty meetings)	3.2	6.4	14.4	43.8	10.9	21.4	313
Department head meetings	5.5	9.3	34.1	40.1	4.1	6.9	364
Subunit head meetings	14.0	6.3	19.6	12.6	4.9	42.7	143
Administrative staff meetings	55.2	16.5	11.3	13.6	1.0	2.4	382
Policy or planning group meetings	10.9	11.1	24.4	48.8	3.4	1.3	377
PTA-type meetings	0.0	1.8	29.2	59.1	5.9	4.1	391
Parent advisory group meetings	0.3	1.0	31.4	52.1	5.5	9.7	290
Student council meetings	39.5	34.3	21.9	3.8	0.0	0.5	420

33. Some school heads use standing committees, ad hoc committees, or task forces to assist with decision making or problem solving; others do not use them. During the 1976-77 school year, how many standing committees, ad hoc committees, or task forces did your school have?

Number of Groups	Standing Committees	Ad hoc Committees or Task Forces
	(percentage of schools)	
None	29.7%	31.6%
1	11.0	13.8
2	15.0	23.0
3	16.9	16.9
4	10.1	6.7
5	7.5	3.8
6	3.7	0.5
7	0.7	0.2
8 or more	5.4	3.6
	n = 427	n = 421

Evaluating Teacher Performance

34. How often do your teachers receive a formal evaluation after their probationary period?

Frequency	Percentage of Schools
More than once a year	28.5%
Once a year	46.3
Every 2 or 3 years	6.7
Rarely or not at all	18.7

n = 445

35. Who participates in the formal evaluation of your teachers?

Personnel	Percentage of Schools
School Head	90.7%
Assistant head(s) or deans	46.0
Subject-area supervisors	12.9
Department heads	57.1
Heads of subunits	3.6
Teachers: peer evaluations	12.2
Teachers: self-evaluation	32.9
Students	18.4
Parents	3.1
Others	4.7

n = 450

36. How often do you observe in classrooms on the average from October through March of the school year?

Frequency	Percentage of Schools
Daily	2.2%
Several times a week	13.0
Once a week	7.0
2 or 3 times a month	20.4
Several times a year	51.3
Not at all	6.1

n = 446

Evaluating Your Performance as Principal

37. How often do you receive a formal evaluation?

Frequency	Percentage of Schools
More than once a year	6.8%
Once a year	43.5
Every 2 or 3 years	11.6
Rarely or not at all	38.1

n = 441

38. Who participates in the formal evaluation of your performance as school head?

Participants	Percentage of Schools
Governing Board	38.4%
Chairman of governing board	22.1
Central office or area administrators	25.3
School head: self-evaluation	27.3
Assistant administrators	20.1
Teachers	39.7
School support staff (clerical, maintenance, etc.)	7.0
Students	8.8
Parents	7.4
Others	10.8

n = 443

RULES

39. What State, governing board, or school regulations govern your activity in the following areas?

Activity	Percentage of Schools Governed by Rules		
	State	District	School
Adding a new academic course	20.2%	21.6%	82.7%
Setting rules for student behavior	4.8	24.8	91.4
Determining course objectives	8.9	7.3	94.8
Setting conditions for early exit/early graduation	15.9	25.5	72.9
Adopting a new school grading practice	2.5	23.9	85.9
Setting criteria for evaluating teacher performance	4.5	25.0	79.8
Setting criteria for evaluating school head performance	3.2	49.4	44.4
Allocating school budget funds among departments, teachers, or activities	1.8	50.0	71.6

n = 440

40. Listed below are certain rules which may govern students and teacher behavior. For each rule, please check whether such a rule exists in your school.*

Rule	Rule Existence			
	Formal	Informal	None	n
	(percentage of schools)			
Student behavior				
Closed campus for students at lunch	82.3%	5.0%	12.7%	440
Students responsible to the school for property damage	77.9	20.0	2.1	439
Hall passes required	37.7	8.6	53.6	432
"No smoking" rules	92.8	3.1	4.0	446
Rules about student dress	88.4	7.1	4.5	448
Teacher behavior				
Bringing an outside speaker in class	33.6	33.4	33.0	443
Frequency of testing (weekly, midterm, final)	30.8	28.3	40.9	435
Amount of homework given students	13.1	45.0	41.9	442
Controlling disruptive students in class	57.0	32.3	10.8	437
Dealing with parent complaints	28.8	44.1	27.2	438

*Responses to the enforcement portion could not be interpreted because of the low number of valid responses.

41. Who approves the following types of teacher activities in your school?

Responses to this question were uninterpretable because of the phrasing of the question.

42. What percent of your school's budget constitutes discretionary or contingency funds?

Percentage of Budget	Percentage of Schools
None	29%
1-4 percent	39
5-9 percent	15
10-14 percent	08
15 percent or more	08

n = 378

43. Can teachers use discretionary or contingency funds for their individual classrooms?

Teachers' Use of Funds	Percentage of Schools
Yes: all	8.9%
Yes: depends on department's allocation policy	39.6
No	51.5

n = 369

Involvement in Decisionmaking

44. We are interested in determining who usually is involved in making decisions relating to certain school matters. For each matter listed across, please check those who are usually involved.

Decisionmaker	Teacher selection	Adding a new academic course	Student rules	Course objectives	Grading	Goals	Budget	n
	(percentage of schools)							
Governing board	22.3%	21.3%	32.1%	4.9%	14.1%	65.9%	85.2%	305
Chairman of governing board	25.3	11.3	18.8	5.4	8.6	61.8	79.0	186
Central office administrator	44.8	31.4	36.0	23.3	35.5	55.2	70.3	172
You as school head	97.9	87.4	91.1	56.8	86.3	91.5	89.9	437
Assistant Administrators or subunit heads	60.7	72.6	86.6	54.0	76.1	81.7	49.4	321
School policy or planning group	6.6	59.9	71.8	34.4	54.2	69.6	20.0	259
Guidance counselors	8.0	55.5	69.2	31.8	68.6	65.9	12.7	299
Department heads	68.0	88.6	24.6	89.4	68.6	56.9	46.1	369
Teacher union or organization	19.7	16.7	34.3	18.2	36.4	43.9	18.2	66
Teachers as individuals	11.9	71.4	67.0	87.5	70.6	68.6	19.0	385
Student-elected or appointed groups	1.9	41.0	86.8	10.5	28.6	49.6	1.1	266
Students as individuals	2.1	51.3	61.9	17.5	25.9	42.3	1.1	189
Parent and community groups	0.0	27.7	55.9	6.2	23.6	60.5	14.4	196
Issues not applicable to this school	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.7	454

The School Head's Authority

45. Within your school, how much authority do you have to allocate school budget funds among departments?

Authority	Percentage of Schools
Complete	50.6%
Considerable	42.5
Little	5.6
None	1.3

n = 447

46. How much authority do you have to make the choice between hiring one full-time teacher or hiring two teacher aides?

Authority	Percentage of Schools
Complete	65.2%
Considerable	31.8
Little	1.8
None	1.1

n = 443

47. How much influence do you have in making decisions concerning the allocation of funds to your school from external sources (church or parish funds, for example)?

Influence	Percentage of Schools
Extensive	28.1%
Considerable	39.1
Little	20.1
None	12.6

n = 427

48. How much authority do you have to fill teacher vacancies?

Authority	Percentage of Schools
School head chooses: central office usually endorses	73.6%
School head chooses within governing board's limits	24.8
Governing board chooses	1.6

n = 440

Problems

49. To what degree is each of these matters a problem in your school?

Problems	Degree of Severity: Very serious	Serious	Minor	Not at all	n
	(percentage of schools)				
School too small to offer a wide range of courses	2.0%	11.7%	56.0%	30.3%	445
School too large to give students enough personal attention	0.2	0.5	13.9	85.5	433
Inadequate instructional materials	0.0	5.0	54.0	41.1	443
Not enough guidance counselors	1.3	9.0	38.6	51.1	446
Teacher absenteeism	0.0	0.9	39.7	59.4	446
Teacher union specifications	0.7	1.9	9.2	88.2	424
Teachers' lack of commitment or motivation	0.0	1.3	40.2	58.4	445
Teacher incompetence	0.0	0.9	46.1	53.0	445
Teacher turnover	1.8	11.2	54.6	32.4	447
Student absenteeism (entire day)	0.0	2.5	62.9	34.6	448
Students' cutting classes	0.0	1.3	57.8	40.8	446
Student apathy	0.7	7.8	69.3	22.2	446
Student disruptiveness	0.0	1.1	61.4	37.5	443
Parents' lack of interest in students' progress	0.5	5.9	64.3	29.3	443
Parents' lack of involvement in school matters	1.1	14.2	58.2	26.5	434
Governing board's interference with school head's leadership	0.5	1.4	20.3	77.9	434
State-imposed curriculum restrictions	0.2	1.8	30.2	67.7	434
Implementing Federal or State requirements for equal opportunity (e.g., desegregation, employment)	0.2	1.4	17.3	81.0	427
Too much paperwork in complying with:					
Governing board requirements	0.5	2.0	29.1	68.4	399
State requirements	1.2	11.6	44.7	42.5	414
Federal requirements	1.7	7.2	39.4	51.6	401
Other	16.4	26.2	19.7	37.7	61

Conflict

50. Generally speaking, how often would you say conflict occurs within your school?

Conflict	Frequency				
	Daily	At least once a week	At least once a month	Rarely or never	n
	(percentage of schools)				
Among students	3.6%	10.4%	29.3%	56.7%	441
Among teachers	0.2	2.7	15.6	81.5	443
Between teachers and students	4.5	12.3	37.7	45.5	440
Between teachers and school head	0.2	1.8	19.3	78.7	441
Between teachers and parents	0.0	1.4	26.4	72.2	436
Between school administrators and parents	0.0	0.7	21.4	77.9	439
Between school and governing board	0.0	0.0	2.9	97.1	421

Note: The interpretability of this item is somewhat limited in that principals variously interpreted conflict. Some took it to mean a verbal altercation, others a physical confrontation, and so forth

Change

51. In the past 5 years, have the following increased, decreased, or stayed about the same in your school?

Characteristic	Changes: Increased	Stayed about the same	Decreased	n
	(percentage of schools)			
Extent of joint planning among teachers	55.3%	41.2%	3.6%	447
Extent of interdependence among departments	34.1	60.9	5.0	443
Number of persons involved in school decisionmaking	65.5	32.9	1.6	447
Number of required courses	27.6	68.4	4.0	446
Number of elective courses	60.9	30.8	8.3	448
Student alternatives for meeting course or graduation requirements	28.7	69.9	1.4	439
Range of alternative grading practices	11.9	81.7	6.4	447
Number of staff in general	41.4	41.6	17.0	447
Number of specialists (e.g., special education, psychologists, resource teachers, media specialists, etc.)	31.3	62.4	6.3	441
Emphasis on basic reading, writing and math skills	63.7	35.7	0.7	446
Your school's enrollment	43.7	29.6	26.7	446
Student academic achievement (standardized test scores)	28.6	59.5	11.9	437
Your school's per-pupil budget	80.9	16.2	2.9	444
Average class size	19.3	59.1	21.6	445
Number of student activities	50.7	46.4	2.9	446
Use of school facilities for community-related activities	51.2	47.0	1.8	445
Educational programs for new clientele (e.g., adults)	11.9	83.1	5.0	419

52. In 1976-77, what percentage of your student body belonged to the following groups?

Ethnic Origin	Mean Student Body Proportions over All Schools
White	83.5%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0.3
Asian/Pacific islander	1.6
Black; not of Hispanic origin	8.3
Hispanic	5.7
Other	0.4

n = 426

Percentage Nonwhite Students	Percentage of Schools
None (all white)	12%
1-4 percent	27
5-19 percent	34
20 percent or more	24

n = 426

53. Upon graduation, approximately what percentage of the class of 1977 entered the following?

Postgraduate Activity	Average Percentage of Students	n
2-year college	15.2%	418
4-year college	59.9	415
Postsecondary vocational school	4.8	415
Full-time labor market	15.1	415
Armed services	1.5	413

54a. Approximately what percentage of the class of 1977 graduated early (or left early with a diploma or equivalent)?

Percentage of Early Graduates	Percentage of Schools
None	67.6%
1-2 percent	20.7
3-5 percent	5.6
6-10 percent	3.5
Over 10 percent	2.8

n = 454

54b. Approximately what percentage of the class of 1977 dropped out, without obtaining a diploma and without transferring to another school?

Percentage of Dropouts	Percentage of Schools
None	68.4%
1-2 percent	26.0
3-5 percent	4.0
6-10 percent	0.5
Over 10 percent	0.2

n = 424

55a. About what percentage of your 10th- to 12th-grade students are taking remedial work in reading?

Percentage of Students	Percentage of Schools
None	46%
1-4 percent	18
5-9 percent	15
10-14 percent	10
15 percent or more	9

n = 429

55b. About what percentage of your 10th- to 12th-grade students are taking remedial work in math?

Percentage of Students	Percentage of Schools
None	51%
1-4 percent	16
5-9 percent	11
10-14 percent	10
15 percent or more	7

n = 414

56. What phrase best describes the occupations of your students' parents?

Parental Occupation	Percentage of Schools
Almost all white-collar/professional	16.4%
Mostly white-collar; some blue-collar	26.8
Evenly mixed	27.1
Mostly blue-collar, some white-collar	23.7
Almost all blue-collar/laborer	5.5
Mostly unemployed or on welfare	0.4

n = 451

57. What phrase best describes the housing in which your students' parents live?

Type of Housing	Percentage of Schools
Almost all owner-occupied homes	32.6%
Mostly owner-occupied, some rental apartments	45.4
Evenly mixed	16.2
Mostly rental unit, some owner-occupied homes	4.9
Almost all rental units	0.9

n = 445

COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL DISTRICT

58. How would the area served by your school be described?

Type of Area	Percentage of Schools
Urban: Industrial, commercial (150,000 +)	13.1%
Urban. Residential (150,000 +)	21.8
Suburban: Adjacent to city of 150,000 +	27.6
Medium city (25,000 - 149,999)	19.3
Nonmetropolitan: noncommuting (- 25,000)	16.3

n = 435

59. Which of the following types of postsecondary schools are located within about 5 miles of your school?

Type of School	Percentage of Schools
2-year college	62.1%
4-year college or university	71.8
Postsecondary vocational school	52.4
Adult or continuing education school	61.2

n = 454

60. What is your school district's current average per-pupil expenditure (excepting for capital outlay and debt service)?

District Per-Pupil Expenditure	Percentage of Schools
Less than $900	36%
$900-1,099	25
$1,100-1,299	11
$1,300-1,499	4
$1,500-1,699	4
$1,700 or more	20

n = 376

61. How many of the following persons are on your school's professional staff?

Staff Members	Mean No. of persons
Assistant heads and deans	1.80
Guidance counselors	2.17
Classroom teachers	27.3
Specialists (e.g., special education, resource teachers, media specialists, psychologists, etc.)	.90
Librarians	1.34
Teacher aides	.72
Volunteers	2.21
Student (practice) teachers	.73

62. What percentage of the school's professional staff belongs to the following groups?

Ethnic Group	Average Percentage of Staff	n
White; not of Hispanic origin	95.0%	436
American Indian/Alaskan native	0.1	433
Asian/Pacific islander	0.5	435
Black; not of Hispanic origin	1.5	437
Hispanic	1.8	436
Other	0.9	435

Percentage Nonwhite Staff	Percentage of Schools
None (all white)	51%
1-4 percent	26
5-9 percent	10
10-29 percent	8
30 percent or more	4

n = 436

63. What is the sexual make-up of your professional staff?

Percentage Male Faculty	Percent Schools
0-33%	36%
34-49	14
50-66	21
67-100	26

n = 443

64. How many days of inservice education for teachers were scheduled by your school or district between June 1976 and June 1977?

Number of Inservice Days	Percentage of Schools
None	4%
1-2	22
3-4	36
5-6	21
7 or more	17

n = 428

School Head

65. Including the 1976-77 school year, what is your professional experience?

Years as School Head of this School	Percentage of School Heads
One year or less	25%
2-3	28
4-5	19
6-7	8
8-9	6
10 years or more	10

n = 439

Years as School Head of Another School	Percentage of School Heads
None	70%
1-2	5
3-4	6
5-6	6
7 years or more	10

n = 444

Years as School Administrator Other than School Head	Percentage of School Heads
None	43%
1-2	16
3-4	15
5-6	10
7 years or more	14

n = 442

Years as Secondary School Teacher	Percentage of School Heads
None	11%
1-3	11
4-6	15
7-9	19
10-15	28
16 years or more	16

n = 444

66. Including yourself, how many school heads or acting school heads has your school had in the last 10 years?

Number of School Heads or Acting School Heads	Percentage of Schools
1	13.3%
2	30.2
3	33.8
4 or more	22.4

n = 450

67. When you were appointed principal of your school, where were you working?

Workplace	Percentage of School Heads
Working in present school district	42.6%
Working someplace else	51.6
Engaged in other activities (e.g., graduate school, military)	5.8

n = 448

68. What is your highest earned degree?

Degree	Percentage of School Heads
Bachelor's	4.0%
Bachelor's plus 5th-year credential	2.9
Master's in an educational field	21.5
Master's in field other than education	15.0
Master's plus additional graduate work	43.7
Ed. Specialist	2.9
Ed.D.	1.1
Ph.D.	4.7
Another type of degree	4.0

n = 446

69. How important are the following responsibilities to you, as school head?

Responsibility	Importance				
	Very	Moderately	Marginally	Unimportant	n
	(percentage of school heads)				
Working closely with teachers on instruction	65.2%	28.1%	6.3%	0.4%	445
Allowing teachers to instruct according to personal preference	39.8	49.0	8.9	2.3	437
Enforcing school rules and policies	65.4	29.0	5.4	0.2	445
Involving numerous people in school decisionmaking	54.5	35.4	9.0	1.1	444
Managing the day-to-day operation of the school	59.0	32.0	8.8	0.2	444
Managing the school budget	52.3	32.5	14.1	1.1	440
Coordinating with governing board	51.1	27.9	14.4	6.6	409
Relating personally with students	76.6	20.0	3.2	0.2	444
Relating personally with parents and community	72.6	25.4	1.8	0.2	441
Resolving or mediating conflicts	61.8	33.7	4.0	0.4	445
Long-range planning; setting goals	75.5	22.9	1.6	0.0	445

70. How important are the following educational goals to you, as school head?

Goals	Importance: Very	Moderately	Marginally	Unimportant	n
	(percentage of school heads)				
Teaching basic skills	88.1%	10.6%	1.1%	0.2%	444
Developing high moral standards and citizenship	94.8	5.2	0.0	0.0	446
Teaching students to get along with others	83.6	15.2	1.1	0.0	446
Developing individual responsibility for the management of one's own learning program	62.1	32.1	5.4	0.5	443
Preparing students for the labor market	44.8	39.7	14.1	1.3	446
Preparing students for college	67.6	30.2	2.2	0.0	447
Developing esthetic appreciation	46.5	45.4	7.6	0.4	447

71. How much influence do you believe you have in governing board decisionmaking?

Influence	Percentage of School Heads
Great deal	73.3%
Moderate amount	24.0
Small amount	2.2
Practically none	0.5

n = 416

72. In general, how satisfied are you with the following?

Job Characteristic	Satisfaction: Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	n
	(percentage of school heads)				
Occupation as school head	62.5%	32.6%	4.5%	0.4%	445
Faculty of your school	61.7	35.8	2.0	0.4	447
Students' achievement	30.9	59.9	8.7	0.4	446
Relationships with governing board	59.9	32.9	5.4	1.7	404
Relationships with parents and community	50.9	40.3	7.9	0.9	442
Performance of your governing board	41.8	38.8	16.9	2.5	397

73. Your sex:

Male = 64.7%
Female = 35.3%
n = 450

74. Your age:

Age	Percentage of School Heads
Under 25	0.2%
25-34	13.1
35-44	43.7
45-54	28.3
55 +	14.7

n = 449

75. What is your racial or ethnic group?

Ethnic Group	Percentage of School Heads
White; not of Hispanic origin	97.8%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0.2
Asian/Pacific islander	0.0
Black; not of Hispanic origin	0.4
Hispanic	1.1
Other	0.4

n = 448

76. If your school offers doctrinal religious education, please check the appropriate statement.

Statement	Percent of schools
No students are required to take doctrinal religious studies	4.7%
Only students of this school's faith are required to take doctrinal religious studies	22.5
All students are required to take doctrinal religious studies	72.8

n = 408

Appendix B
Sampling Plan and Responses

A 13-percent sample (600 schools) was chosen from the universe of 4,722 secondary schools with a 12th grade. Two stratifying criteria were used, one representing four geographic regions of the country, and the other representing three metropolitan status categories.

The components were as follows:

Regions of the Country

East: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia;

Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin;

South: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia;

West: Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

Metropolitan Status

This designation was based on U.S. Census Bureau definitions. An SMSA consists of a county, or group of contiguous counties, containing a city of 50,000 or more.

Urban: school located in a central city (50,000 or more) of a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA).

Suburban: school located outside the designated central city but still within the SMSA.

Rural: school outside of an SMSA.

This stratifying design resulted in 12 cells—four regional categories by three metropolitan status categories. For example, a given cell would contain Eastern urban schools, Western suburban schools, and so forth.

School size was then taken into account by sampling proportionally to the likelihood of a school's presence in a cell. Twelfth-grade enrollment was used as a

proxy for school size. The percentage of all 12th-grade students in each cell was calculated. This percentage was used to calculate the number of schools to be drawn from each cell.

Within each cell, schools were arranged in order of the size of their 12th-grade enrollments. Then, the percentage referred to above was used to pick a random start. To illustrate, assume that cell "Y" contains 400 schools. These schools enroll 10 percent of all 12th-grade students in the country. Of the 600 school sample to be drawn for the survey, 10 percent, or 60 of them, are to be drawn from cell "Y." The random start began 10 schools down on the list, and every 10th school was then selected.

The sampling procedure is illustrated in the following table, which uses hypothetical cells "X" and "Y" to show how the sample was drawn and how school size was taken into account.

This sampling method assured that the number of schools in the sample represented the proportional number of students in the population that attend schools in the various cells. It also assured that small or rural schools were not overrepresented and that large or urban schools were not underrepresented.

	(a)	(b)	(c)
Cell	Number of schools in cell	Percentage of all 12th-grade students in cell	The number of schools sampled from each cell depends on that cell's proportion of 12th-grade students (b).
Cell "X"	200	20%	20% of 200 = 40 schools Cell "X" contains 200 schools, so 40/200 or every 5th school will be chosen.
Cell "Y"	400	10%	10% of 400 = 40 schools Cell "Y" contains 400 schools, so 40/400 or every 10th school will be chosen.

The following table shows the number and proportion (in parentheses) of respondent schools in each cell.

Proportion of Sample in Each Cell

Metropolitan Status*	Region: East	Midwest	South	West	Total
Urban	29 (6.4%)	14 (3.1%)	18 (4.0%)	9 (2.0%)	70 (15.5%)
Suburban	116 (25.7%)	127 (28.1%)	32 (7.1%)	42 (9.3%)	317 (70.1%)
Rural	30 (6.6%)	22 (4.9%)	9 (2.0%)	4 (0.9%)	65 (14.4%)
Total	175 (38.7%)	163 (36.1%)	59 (13.1%)	55 (12.2%)	

*Using Census designations

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